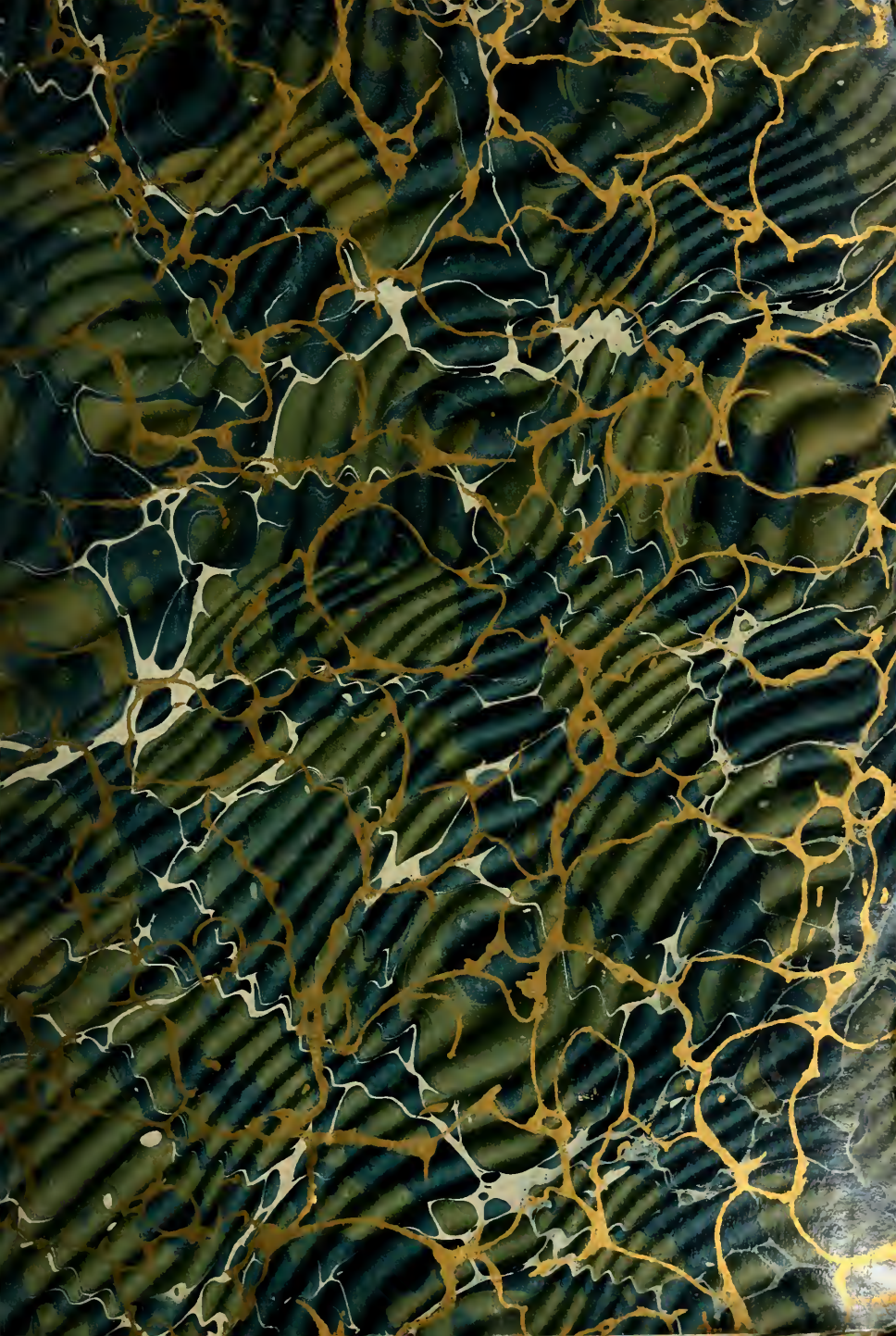




DANIEL & CHARLOTTE GURNEY



THE HISTORY OF
Mr. John Decastro
AND HIS BROTHER BAT
COMMONLY CALLED OLD CRAB

THE MERRY MATTER WRITTEN BY

JOHN MATHERS

*THE GRAVE BY A SOLID
GENTLEMAN*



IN TWO VOLUMES

Volume Two

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THE
HISTORY OF MR. JOHN DECASTRO

CHAPTER I

Some Account of a curious Charm—A Kiss, and a very sweet one too.

SOME wise folks say people soon get tired of things; other wise folks say that the more a man uses himself to a thing the more he likes it: now it seems to us, that wise folks take a pleasure in turning plain people's heads round upon their shoulders, by contradicting one another to make sport of others: a fine use to put wisdom to! but let it pass. We very well know, that in Mr. Decastro's case the more he lived in retirement the better he liked it, and had now come to such a pass as to shut his doors against every body but a few very old friends and relations. A carriage, therefore, driving to his gates, always put him in the fidgets till he knew what it brought. The Countess of Budemere's was now come, when he, seeing the well known coronet upon its panels, instantly came forth to welcome his sister and his niece. The unexpected news which they brought with them surprised him and Mrs. Decastro not a little.

Genevieve, who itched from head to foot to get at Julia, and to tell her the good news, was stopped at the bottom of the stairs, very luckily, by Dr. Grosvenor,

with George Grove in her hand, who were going with very little prudence to overwhelm the poor girl, or, in other words, to kill her with kindness.

"Stop this moment," said the doctor; "this matter must be broken to her by little and little; you mean well, I well know; but we may mean well, and, at the same time, do a great deal of mischief. Return, both of you, to the saloon, this moment. I will go and prepare my pretty patient for the pleasure which would be too exquisite to be borne by one in her situation; it must be dosed out by small quantities, and not given all at once, for thus the best medicines would become poisons."

Upon which prudent advice Genevieve and George returned to the company in the saloon, and the doctor to Julia, whom he had just visited. How came the doctor to know their errand? Why, Mr. Inquisitive, Genevieve told it him as fast as she could get the words out of her mouth, and she had a pretty ready utterance, if her passions did not get in her throat and choke her. Upon the doctor's re-entrance into Julia's apartment, "What are you come back for, Dr. Grosvenor?" said Julia, "and pray, what carriage was that which just now came to the house?"

"O," said the doctor, "a carriage which you are very well acquainted with, no new thing. I think your pulse is a little quicker to-day, have you had any thing to disturb you?"

"Did nobody tell you what I have heard this morning? the news from Bath I mean?"

"Yes," said he, "I have been told, but not told that you had been told it, I could feel it in your pulse, however, a little too plainly."

"Indeed, Dr. Grosvenor," said she, "I think it is better for me to know it—it put me into a little flutter at first, but it was soon over."

The doctor then made some minute inquiries as to the particular manner in which she found herself affected by this intelligence, and was better satisfied than he expected to be by her answers, and said, he did not think she was so strong, but was glad to be mistaken for some reasons which he would explain presently.

"I think I do feel a little stronger to-day," said she, "I know not why: but pray, Dr. Grosvenor, what have you got to say to me?"

"Why," said he, "I have a little experiment to try, and am waiting for a good day; it is a little charm—you smile, but I am sure it will cure you if you can rally spirits enough to bear it—it is a certain cure for the heart-ache; and what is a little odd, it is a more certain cure for your heart-ache than any other heart-ache, but yet it will cure every heart that aches because your heart aches, at the same time."

"O my dear Dr. Grosvenor," said Julia, looking earnestly in the old gentleman's face, "this is something to amuse me."

"Yes," said he, "it will amuse you very much indeed, so much that I am only afraid that you will not be able to bear the pleasure of it, it will be so great, and therefore I will not try the experiment of it without coming first to break with you upon it, and to prepare you for the greatest pleasure that you ever felt in your life."

"This charm," said she, "is the strangest of any that I ever heard of, and I know of a hundred for various things; there are charms for good luck, and charms for

the tooth-ache, and charms for the ague, and charms to get a sweetheart, and, heigh-ho, charms to find one that is lost—O Dr. Grosvenor! I blush to think so many know the cause of my illness!”

“My dear pretty patient,” said the old man, taking Julia’s hand kindly between his own, “let this no longer disturb you; there is no harm in an affection like yours, the harm excepted which it does yourself; but if you can find spirits to bear the experiment I am sure that I now know a charm, for I will still call it so, which I am sure will cure you.”

“You have a strange earnestness in your manner,” said she, “which surprises me, I really thought you in jest, but you seem to be in earnest—pray tell me what this charm is?”

“Why,” said he, “it must be wrought by a young person of my acquaintance, but the danger is this, that he is so like Mr. George Grove that I was tender of bringing him into your presence without preparing you; we must, at all events, put some crape on his face, for no man was ever so much like another on earth as he is to him: he will come in with a little medicine in his hand, which you must first take to prepare you for the charm, which will come next.”

Julia looked steadfastly in the doctor’s face, which bore a sign of much gravity, and said, “What you tell me is very strange, but still I cannot but think you mean only to amuse me; this young person will come and bring a medicine?”

“He will.”

“Let him come then,” said Julia, “I don’t think I shall mind seeing him; will he come to-day?”

“He is in the house at this moment,” said the doctor

"and your cousin, Miss De Roma, was coming with him in great haste, but I forbade her, lest you should be too much disturbed on the sudden, and told her to stay a little until I had prepared matters."

"Surely," said Julia, "you have all too much tenderness to put a trick upon me, I am sure my dearest Jenny would not do such a thing for the world; if any ill was to happen to me I am sure it would break her kind heart: she was coming with him, I think you said? can't she be in the room all the while?"

"I can't tell you why," said the doctor, "but you had much rather be alone with him; besides, it will make the charm the stronger."

"Bless me! this is very odd," said she, "but I hope he will not take any liberties with me?"

"Not one more than you would have him take—I will now introduce him," said the doctor, going away.

"O Dr. Grosvenor," exclaimed Julia, "pray don't go yet—my heart fails me—I don't know what to think of this—Jenny's old nurse told me one day at the cottage, that you medical folks have twenty tricks to amuse people before you perform the most terrible operations. I will not consent to any operation till I have seen my papa and asked his leave and advice; you have got great knives in your pocket, and this man will come to help hold me; I am terrified to death at the thought!"

"My dear child," said the doctor, "I have no knives, put your hands into my pockets if you will, and as to surgical operations none can possibly be required in your case; you mistake the matter; what will be done will give you the greatest pleasure, but no pain, if excess of pleasure be no pain: besides, how can I per-

form any operation when I tell you that I shall not be in the room? shall I bring the young man to you?"

"This is very strange—well—let Jenny bring him and be with me, you said she was coming with him at first when you stopped her."

"We will both bring him, and stand within call here in the next room; I assure you you had rather have the young person alone with you."

The doctor then went, and presently returned with George Grove and Genevieve. He took his stand at the door, and Genevieve came up to Julia, with a face full of joy, leading George with his face craped, and placing him close to her chair, gave Julia a lively smile and left the room with Dr. Grosvenor. As soon as they were gone, George felt about with his hand for Julia as if he did not know whereabouts she was.

"Here I am, sir," said she, "on this side of you;" and she arose from her chair as if to be ready to run away if he should attempt any thing. George held a glass of wine in his hand, which he presented, and said, in a whisper, she must drink it. She took it, and sipped, but seemed afraid to drink it off.

"It tastes like wine," said she; "is the medicine put into wine, sir?"

"It is," said he, still whispering.

"What will it do, sir? I am afraid to drink it."

"It will only prepare you for the charm," whispered George. She then drank it off at twice drinking, for it was a large glass.

"Have you drank the medicine?" said he.

She said she had drank it all. He took a piece of paper out of his pocket, and said it contained the first part of the charm, which was now to come: upon which

he took his watch and bade her look until one minute were passed, for till then the paper was not to be opened. She took the watch, and looking at it said, "Good heaven! why, this is Mr. George Grove's watch, and here is the very seal which I gave him! How came you by this watch, sir?"

"It is my own," said he; "but watch the time: the medicine begins to work, I see, by your mistaking my watch for another's."

"I am sure I have made no mistake," continued she, opening the watch, "for here is the little watch case woven by my own hands and formed of my own hair and my name twisted into it!"

"All is well," said he, "the medicine works well: it must now be time for the second part of the charm;" upon which he opened the paper and took out of it the miniature picture which he had taken out of her hand when she fainted at the cottage, and said, "this little amulet must be put round your neck and the miniature be dropped into your bosom."

Julia started at the sight of the picture, which she had lost not knowing how, and said, "This is my picture which Mr. George Grove gave me to keep for his sake; by what means on earth came you by this miniature?"

George then took off one of his gloves, and Julia instantly exclaimed, "I can swear to that ring, and to that little knot of hair, for I tied the knot with my own fingers and put it into the ring myself: those diamonds I have seen a hundred times, and was told by Mr. Grove himself that they cost fifty guineas;—who have I with me? by what unfair means came you by these things?—stay—one moment—hold out your hand, sir;

why, how can this be, you must have robbed Mr. Grove of his finger too, for here are the marks in it where his pointer bit him!" upon which Julia took a step or two back and stared eagerly at George, when he took her attention off his person by unfolding another paper, on which were written the words of the charm, he told her, and holding it up Julia read the following inscription, "GEORGE has leave to wed his JULIA."

"Cruel, cruel deception," exclaimed she, "who can make me amends for this inhuman usage?"

"It is I," exclaimed George, in a loud voice, "it is I alone that can make you amends! O my love, my love, we meet to part no more!" saying which George fondly clasped his sweet milk-maid in his arms and sealed the glad tidings upon Julia's lips.

Dr. Grosvenor and Genevieve then came into the room, and the doctor, taking George by the arm, said, "Come, sir, you have administered the medicine and performed the charm, you must depart this moment;" saying which the doctor took George away, and left Julia and Genevieve to have a little talk by themselves.

CHAPTER II

The salutary Effects of the Charm—Lord George E. and Sir Harry St. Clair renew their Addresses to Lady Charlotte Orby—Lady Charlotte and Harry Lamsbroke fall in Love, and Genevieve gets deeper in it.

As soon as Mr. Grosvenor and George Grove had left the room (the doctor, for some reason best known to a medical man perhaps, conceiving it prudent, in his wisdom, to keep the lovers upon spare diet a little at first, lest they should get too many sweet things and make themselves sick), Genevieve's tongue ran like a post-horse and never stopt till she had explained all the matters to Julia. But having much other matter pressing upon us, suffice it to say, that the effects of the charm, as the doctor foretold, became very visible in the countenance and constitution of the beautiful milk-maid, who soon recovered all she had lost, except her heart, and that gave her no trouble while George Grove had the keeping of it.

The Countess of Budemere took the first opportunity to question Mr. Grove upon his very mysterious and extraordinary conduct at Bath. Her ladyship might question, but to get Mr. Grove to answer was no such easy matter. He whispered it in her ear that the fewer questions were answered the better, ask as many as she would; he was glad to find what Lord Budemere was in time; to know a man and to find out what he was were two things; he now both knew his lordship and had found him out to be a great——.

The History of Mr. John Decastro

The countess had pretty shrewd suspicions of his lordship's merits, and the light which she now received from Mr. Grove, cast a sun-beam on their beauties. In a word, she saw that the less she said the better, and she saw with the eyes of a very wise woman. She heard Mr. Grove just whisper a very ugly word, and she was not quite sure if it was not "scoundrel." Mr. Grove, however, had drawn his nose out of her ladyship's ear, a place where he usually put it when he talked to people, when he uttered this melodious whisper.

Soon after a letter came to say that his lordship was gone into Italy. This letter was written to Old Crab, who was still engaged in his affairs, and he had an Augæan stable to cleanse; but the less we say on this subject the better, if for this reason only, that Old Crab was never more angry than when any talked about his merits and services, except when a man offered to reward them. A living given to any who was, to all appearance, quite a stranger to the family, might well be expected to excite some suspicion in a man of Old Crab's shrewdness. By the by it had been promised him by Lord Budemere for the trouble he had taken in his matters, but Old Crab told his lordship he might get another to do the business if he had a mind to pay for it; and that the devil had more livings in his gift already than his share came to. We say this thing excited Old Crab's suspicions, and he soon found out what obligations Lord Budemere was under to the family of the Reverend Mr. F.

It may be some gratification to the reader to hear that poor Mrs. Morris was soon after married to a very worthy young clergyman, and met the reward her vir-

tues deserved in a good husband. This thing was managed by Lady Charlotte Orby, but that lady, like the ink-fish, so darkened the waters, that we could never fish out any more of the story. Mrs. Morris lost the two children which she had by Lord Budemere, by the small-pox.

To return to Lady Charlotte: it was no easy matter to know what her real sentiments were in any matter, and people never knew less of the truth than when she spoke it, for it always looked like a trick; she certainly was in love with George Grove, we do not affirm this because she said so, but ground our assertions upon what her husband told us, whom we really believe to be the only person whom she never once deceived.

“My love,” said she to him in one of her fond moments, “you are the only person who ever had all my heart; I loved George Grove, it is true, but not entirely, because another had his heart, whom I loved, and upon whose account alone I resigned him; this thing cost me many a tear in private, which tears never ceased to flow until you came and took full possession of me and all my furniture.”

It was a very singular thing, but Lady Charlotte was never at any loss for an escape, come upon her when one would, for she always told the truth and so managed matters as never to get believed but when she did not, so this way she could not be at any time at any loss for an answer. One day she had retired to her apartment, and had forgot to lock her door, and she seldom went into it without locking it, when Genevieve bounced in upon her all on a sudden and found her ladyship in tears.

"My dear Charlotte," said she, in her eager manner, "what is the matter with you?"

"I am crying because Julia has taken George Grove away from me," said she. Now nothing could be more true, but at the same time less believed.

"You are one of the oddest girls, Charlotte," said Genevieve, "but if you will trust nobody, you go the way never to have a friend, but I love you, you toad, with all your oddities, nay, I believe a good deal for them," added she, leaving the print of her lips on Lady Charlotte's wet cheek, for when Genevieve kissed it was always with fury. "You are too shrewdly suspected," said Genevieve, "to have broken off this match for me ever to believe that you are in love with George, but how you have contrived to throw every thing into such confusion I suppose we shall never know; but the more I suspect you to have done it, the more I love you for our sweet cousin's sake—yes, and your own too:—my dear Charlotte, tell me how you did it?—You cunning little puss, I'll squeeze the breath out of your body."

Lady Charlotte squalled out, for Genevieve laid hold of her like the boa constrictor, and made her ladyship's bones crack.

"What can you be so sad about, Charlotte?" said she, wiping her eyes, for Genevieve had a soft bosom and felt another's sorrows like her own.

"Now this affair is at an end," said her ladyship, "I have been plagued with letters and visits again both from Lord George and Sir Harry St. Clair, who are determined to try again for me, but I hate them both, and would sooner marry one of George Grove's old boots than have either!"

Reader, did we ever say any thing to you about one Sir John Lamsbrooke, of Lamsbrooke Park, who married one of Mr. Decastro's sisters? We have got a delicious love story to tell about his son Harry—it is as sweet as sugar sweetened with honey—yes, indeed it is, and we will tell it you now directly—that is, we will begin to tell it you, it must not come all at once, for then you will not taste it half; people are apt to gape and swallow in such a devilish hurry, when they get a rich thing in their mouths, that they give themselves no time in the world to relish it—gulp and swallow is all they think of! Eager as you may be, fair reader, we will take care that you do not make yourself sick—but not to keep your pretty mouth watering—Harry Lamsbrooke, a beautiful youth—too handsome for a man and for a woman too, as some cross toads may think, who are always the less pleased the more beauty they see in their own sex—adrabbit them, they deserve to be well whipped, don't they?—yes, too handsome, as we were a-saying, for a man; but he had his faults, he had very bad nails on his fingers and his toes too, O Momus! we must name some faults, and so here are twenty, for he had ten fingers and ten toes, and every-one of them had a bad nail on it, and so he had twenty faults, and that is enough for any body. Acerbus and George Grove loved him, nevertheless, with all his faults; they were all school-fellows and brother collegians, but this was the first time he had been at the castle since he was a little boy, and he was come to visit his two friends, George Grove and the Philosopher. Now it came to pass, that Lady Charlotte was taking one of her solitary walks toward the ferry, when, at a sudden turn, in a by-path, she saw a man's leg lie

upon the ground! She was going to be frightened at it, for she thought, at first, it had been cut off and thrown under the bush, and that would have been a very terrible thing. She took heart, however, to peep round the bush, and there she saw one of the most beautiful young men she had ever seen in her life fast asleep under a hawthorn! She started back at first ten paces when she saw nothing but the leg again, which was slender, but very prettily made—she stood still and admired it, it was in a beautiful silk stocking, and its veins, being a little swelled from the knee being bent, appeared through. She saw a great fly presently settle upon one of the veins, and darting its proboscis into it brought a spot of blood upon the white stocking. It pierced her tender bosom to see such cruelty, she went a little nearer, and with her soft fingers took the greedy fly by its wings without disturbing the sleeping youth—pretty bosom! soon to be worse pierced!

Grown bold, she stood in silent admiration at so much beauty. The best thing she could have done would have been to shut her eyes. What business had she to stand staring at a handsome young man fast asleep?—it was as good as to say that she liked to look at him, and that was very shocking—but his eyes were shut—this shows what impudent things the ladies will do when nobody sees them! sad husseys! more shame for them. Liked to look at him! aye, if it had been a great snake asleep under a bush she would have made the best use of her legs, but as it was, her legs were as quiet as if they had been made of white marble. What could ail her? what make her creep round the bush and poke out her nose just over Harry's face, for it was Harry Lamsbroke that lay asleep there? she could not

want to meddle with any thing? some ladies, they say, are thieves in their hearts, and will steal other people's goods if they can fairly get off with them: it is enough to turn a man gray, to think what a devil of a thing temptation is! Now Lady Charlotte was vastly fond of cherries, and Harry's lips looked so like two ripe ones that grew close together, that any one might be excused for making such a mistake.

Good heavens! he started up! she dashed away unseen—what in the world did she do?—Hush. Well! very well! now, pray, reader, what is it that you have got in your wicked pate? You think, and be hanged, that Lady Charlotte kissed the young gentleman as he lay fast asleep, and gave him such a twinge as made him jump. If she had touched him with her lips she would have stung him to death, for the poison had sunk into his heart and killed him outright; but he lived a great many years after this, which is some sort of proof that Lady Charlotte did not kiss him to death: but people's imaginations are so full of combustibles that the smallest spark sets all on fire—and then a writer is blamed for blowing folks up! What is the world made of? One's horses' heels will strike fire as one trots along sometimes, and if the world is made of gunpowder, why, a kick against a flint may play the devil! If people must needs throw the reins upon the neck of the imagination, there will be no end of it: a man standing between two gate posts may excite shocking thoughts, and the ladies find out a thousand indecencies in a pin-cushion.

If Lady Charlotte had kissed the young gentleman as he lay asleep, the manner in which young ladies are bred in the best schools taken into due consideration,

there had been no sort of wonder in that. Are not professors paid on purpose to make young ladies impudent? are fathers and mothers, and guardians, to pay their money for nothing? besides, if kissing is left off, what will the world come to? and the ladies are making more room every day for it; nothing could be got at once upon a time but a lady's face, and only one man could kiss a woman at a time; but now-a-days, what with bare necks and naked shoulders, ten men may kiss before and twenty behind and not go over half the ground neither! Lord! what fun there is in the world! When a lady is muffled up to the throat she calls herself undressed, and when she is full dressed she has scarce a rag to cover her! Well, a man cannot see too much of his bargain before he comes to make his purchase, certainly, and if a man gets a bad neck or a bad shoulder, to go no further, the fault is none of the women's; so that whatever is said of the ladies' naked quarters, they deal in their meat at least as fairly as the butcher, who has the face to show, in open shop, necks and breasts, legs and shoulders, ribs, loins, rumps, and the devil knows what, and thinks no more of blushing about the matter, than the ladies—Impudent dogs! but they will stick at nothing to raise people's appetites, that's the truth of it. A butcher's shop is an offence to national chastity, the thing should come under cognisance of the legislature, and a butcher show a buttock of beef or a sheep's tail at his peril.

If folks want to buy they may go into the house and take a modest peep under a cloth; what will this world come to!

But to return to Harry Lamsbroke: he had not seen an inch of Lady Charlotte's skin because his eyes were

shut, which will not pass with some, perhaps, for a good reason, they must c'en rest contented, however, for we cannot, at present, give any better. Well, but Lady Charlotte's eyes were open, and she thought him the most sweet young man she had ever seen in her life, but her heart was so full of George Grove at present, that she could scarce think of any other. But Harry and she had not been many days together at the castle, before he paid her some little attentions which could not be mistaken by her ladyship, though not much attended to by others. These little attentions were as sweet as sugar to her, and she soon began to smack her pretty lips at them. Well, well, one of her ladyship's lips might kiss the other, and no harm surely, but the world is so outrageously modest!—this is a very warm subject—we will speak a word or two of Lady Budemere, to let it cool a little.

In regard to her husband's leaving her to take care of the kingdom of England single-handed, she cared no more than if a fish as big as his lordship had left England in a basket—no not she—that harum-starum, rantum-scantum, hand-over-head, hey-go-mad business called matrimony had been hatched between them by friends, as they are called, who set the cat at the dog and the dog at the cat, and call it wedding and be hanged—she never loved her lord, or he his lady, the devil took Cupid's place between them; it had been a match bought ready made for them, and fitted neither one nor the other—a man might as well go into rag fair, and cry “Hollo,” for the first pair of breeches with one of the holsters forty times as big as the other, and the seat hitched up on the right side five and twenty miles above the left, and expect all matters to sit as flush and come

as close as if the profile of his rump had been taken with mathematical instruments! Such a pair, we mean man and wife, not a pair of breeches, such a pair was never stitched together as Lord and Lady Budemere; love, their friends told them, would come after marriage! a fool's head come after marriage, saving your reverence—one no more cared how soon the other's neck were broken than the hangman: albeit, save a little slip, Lady Budemere was a very virtuous woman, aye, save as before saved, as any on the universal earth. Mrs. Decastro and she lived in the bonds of friendship, the kind tears which the countess shed long ago in the pork and butter shop, stuck Mrs. Decastro and the countess together like mortar between two bricks in a wall.

Now it came to pass, as things are apt to do when they happen in the world, that Lady Charlotte had two lovers besides her sweet Harry—and no lady's little mouth ever watered so much for a nice ripe strawberry—and these gallants were Lord George and Sir Harry St. Clair, as hath been said, or will be, and that is the same thing—now her mother—how the old cats teach their young kittens things!—now her mother wanted to teach her ladyship to fall in love with one of them, since George Grove had run back to his pretty milk-maid, but she told her mamma that she had just fallen in love with Harry Lamsbroke; however, if either of them could win her over, she would marry him as fast as the fastest reading parson of them all could give them a right to one another's persons; entreating her mother at the same time not to set her heart upon either, for she never had been so much in love with any one in her life as with Harry Lamsbroke. Now this

was very true, but her mamma did not believe it for all that, because, if it had been true, she thought it of all things the least likely that Lady Charlotte should declare what man had her heart.

Harry, who was nick-named the Angel at Oxford, upon account of his singular beauty, was so very modest that he teased poor Lady Charlotte sadly, and put her to the expense of a thousand kittenish tricks to make him understand her. He was very much like George Grove in his manner, but had too much bashfulness, one would have thought, to have seized such furious hold upon a lady's heart. The foolish thing was always a-blushing, and it sometimes made Lady Charlotte blush because she could not blush as often as Harry blushed, or because a blush made her Harry look so pretty. Genevieve told him one day, binding a cord of pearls round his flaxen head which she took off her own black pate, that she would put him into petticoats and see what a pretty girl he would make.

"Look, Charlotte," said she, "his beard won't be seen at a little distance, for it is more like the down upon a peach than a beard—see how pretty he looks in pearls!"

To Harry's face the living crimson flew, for he felt a little indignant at being made the ladies' plaything. Adszooms! it would have made a man laugh to see how fond Lady Charlotte and Genevieve grew all on a sudden of walking to and fro before the—Ahey! how is all this? a blank page! why, we thought we had written the four sides of the sheet out!—We must let thee into the secret, reader:—we had four pages to stitch in at this place in the room of four which had been blotted out; now we had written three of the said pages, and

had got it in our head that we had written all four, and so began to tack all together with the beginning of the sentence which was to dovetail this page in with the next, as the joiners talk; when, lo, upon turning over the leaf we found that we had a whole page to write!—so we thought it good to tell thee this story, reader, to help us on with it. It is not every tailor that can put in a patch well, he must needs be a master of his needle who can sew in a bit so that another cannot find it out.

What can we talk about for ten or a dozen lines? What a knack Lady Charlotte had of telling the truth and passing it off for a lie? This were none other than to make truth itself a wicked thing, for the end and object of a lie being but to deceive, if truth can be made by any trick to answer such a purpose, truth is quite as bad as a lie; perhaps worse, for it is putting a good thing to a bad use, and bringing truth itself into disgrace by making it serve the purpose of a lie, which makes a double crime of it, and this Lady Charlotte made a constant practice of, until she brought poor Harry in peril of his life by it; and if Old Comical had not come in just in time, his two rivals would have cudgelled him to death, as will be seen in its due time and place. Poor Charlotte! she had felt less if they had beaten her instead of her Harry, for every blow that he received struck her in her tenderest part! The moral is, that if folks do bad things, they are sure to suffer for it one time or another.

Well said, Old Solid—that is a stopping oyster! * and

* A *stopping* or *choking* oyster is obsolescent English slang for a retort or device which puts another to silence.—*Editor's Note.*

brings us in again with our Adzooks! how fond Lady Charlotte and Genevieve grew on a sudden of walking to and fro before the library windows; they were always wanting some book or other, and the philosopher said one day, a little pceevishly for a philosopher, "If you want books you may come in and read here, there's room enough for you and Charlotte, Harry and I shall not be disturbed if two women can hold their tongues together."

Upon this, which was spoken a little roughly to Genevieve, she and Lady Charlotte got very bookish on a sudden, and what was to be done? if they could not get books given them out at the window, why, they must go in, to be sure, and get the books themselves; but the worst of it was, when they got into the library they could not be quiet, they must be whispering together, and now and then a laugh would break out in spite of their teeth, which they might have kept shut, and then they might have laughed more to themselves. "Harry," quoth the philosopher one day as he was deep in some problem, "do turn those two women out of the library, or let us take our books and begone—it is impossible to read or write; I can't think what it is that they come here for so much, isn't it very marvellous?"

Harry, however, was not very willing to turn Lady Charlotte out, however the philosopher might want to get rid of Genevieve, who was sure to begin the noise, upon which he took a chess-board, and curling his finger to her ladyship said, in a whisper, when she came near him, that he would teach her the game, and Lady Charlotte was very glad to learn it because it was a pretty game. Now it came to pass that Harry's expedient kept the ladies apart and quiet, and Genevieve

had now nothing on earth to do but sit with a great folio open before her and stare at the philosopher, by which means she got more and more in love with him every day.—Her hoe and her spade, her rake and her fork, her bill and her reap-hook were all neglected, and Old Crab lost at least half her labour on his farm as long as the Oxford vacations lasted; and he really found her of great use to him, for, she not only did a great deal of work herself, but none dared be idle when she was in the field. Love is a sad plague to men and women, how the birds, beasts, and fishes manage matters is best known to themselves.

CHAPTER III

Further Accounts of Lady Charlotte and her Lovers—Of Genevieve and the Philosopher—Of George and Julia—And how Old Comical falls in Love with Madam Funstall of Dilly's Piddle.

“LOVE,” says a wise man, “is a great fire.” One would conclude that Genevieve thought so, for she plunged herself over head and ears in the lake every morning, being very fond of bathing; but, like a water-rocket, came out of the water as much on fire as she went into it: a fish is an animal of very few words, otherwise, it were odds that we should have heard how hot she made the water. But historians must not stand still to crack jokes. Now, in regard to Genevieve, we must leave her burning, and who can help it? for although she had done as good as cry out “Fire!” twenty times in the hearing of the philosopher, he was always so deep in Aristotle, or Plato, that it were a great chance if Mount Vesuvius had burst under his nose, if he had heard or smelled it. We will now attend to Lady Charlotte for a page or two, and then come back again to the flaming Genevieve: flaming! yes, flaming, for she was—we must not say what she was.

Lord George E. and Sir Henry St. Clair, hearing of the intended match between Mr. Grove's son and Lady Charlotte, had raised their siege, after having made a good deal of stir to very little purpose in the matter: and, although they had a great mind to quarrel with

George, thought it a little hard, forced, as they found him to be, upon her ladyship against his will, for him to get shot into the bargain. These gentlemen, who had quite as great a mind to Lady Charlotte's fortune as her person, had made a comical bargain together, which kept them strict friends, and allies, although they were rivals.

"Look you, St. Clair," said his lordship, as soon as he found the baronet angling for the same fish, "it will not be worth our while to shoot one another upon this business, suppose we bargain for smart-money?" *

"How do you mean," said the baronet, "what smart-money?"

"Why," said his lordship, "we cannot both marry the girl at once; we are old friends and brother officers, give me your hand, don't let us come to wrangling; if you get her, promise to pay me upon your wedding-day ten thousand pounds, you will be sure of her fortune, you know: and, if I get her, I will bind myself in the same promise, so that, go the thing which ever way it will, we get a hedge, and shall both be winners; come, let us leave fighting to fools, you and I are known men, St. Clair, and have no reason now to shoot one another to let folks know that we are not afraid of the report of a pistol; give me your hand, is it a bargain?"

"She is certainly a very fine girl," said the baronet, "but there are plenty of fine girls to be had without fighting for them: come, I will agree, I want money, and as for love, I am too old for that to do me much

* In law *smart-money* means vindictive or exemplary damages. The term is also used colloquially to designate a payment made in avoidance of some unpleasant contingency.—*Editor's Note.*

mischief now—but remember, I stipulate thus: if she shows a decided preference to one of us, the other shall quit the pursuit and do all he can to help his friend.”

“It is agreed,” said his lordship; “but I have one thing to add, a lawyer shall draw up our agreement that it may be referred to in case of necessity.”

“By all means,” said the baronet, “let us about it presently.”

And thus it was done, and they re-attacked Lady Charlotte with redoubled fury, as often as they could get at her, which was not so often as they could have wished, upon the account of her being so much at the castle, where they could not come, Mr. Decastro having shut his doors against all but a small number of select friends and relations. Lady Charlotte, however, took care to put herself in their way at times, at Hindermark, and other places, where they visited in common, conceiving that good uses might be made of them to further her designs on Harry Lamsbroke, who was very young and so timid and bashful that, although she had sure proof of his being very much in love with her, as much indeed as she was with him, which was saying a good deal, she could not get any offer from him, although he actually had a letter in his pocket for her if she could have got it out. And there it would lie till the corners were worn off, when Harry would write it all over again: and this the modest thing had done over and over, but could never get courage enough to give it to his sweetheart! and, although an accident one day actually put it into her hand, Harry was such a simpleton as to take it away! It was thus it happened:

Now we fear we shall scarce get credit when we

say that George Grove and Harry Lamsbroke never neglected the church on a Sunday, or, indeed, on any other, when the doors were opened, the philosopher having given his two friends such a taste that way that it held them both as long as they lived. So one Sunday morning the family at the castle were all in readiness to go to church, when Lady Charlotte said she had got the head-ache.

"Your head had better ache in the church than out of it," said the philosopher; "suppose some friend had given you a thousand pounds a-year, would you not go twice in a week, though your head ached, to thank him for it if he lived twice as far off as my uncle's church stands?"

"Gratitude," said her ladyship, "would bring her twice a-day to do it, if she thought her friend would be pleased with it."

"Who gave you all you enjoy on earth," said the philosopher, "and gave you the means to enjoy it too?"

Harry Lamsbroke fetched her ladyship's hat and gloves, who, whatever force the philosopher's argument might have, had no objection to go to church with Harry; though she could have been content, perhaps, to have staid at home with him, and had him all to herself. The family were come into the pew, and Old Crab had begun the service, with a look of approbation at seeing it so full, when Harry saw that Lady Charlotte had no prayer-book, and taking his own from his pocket gave it her with his letter sticking unseen between the leaves of it, for the prayer-book, it seems, had picked up the letter in Harry's pocket: it had got into the Confession, and Lady Charlotte presently came to it, saw the direction and returned it to poor Harry;

who fell into such a flutter as he knelt by her side as could not possibly be concealed from her, she saw it and knew the cause of it too, but had too much honour not to give Harry his letter back again, though she had a very fair opportunity to have taken it without his knowing any thing of the matter, for he was engaged in reading with the philosopher, having given up his own book to her ladyship. This little accident confirmed her in her suspicions of Harry's intentions. She could have found it in her heart to have picked his pocket of the letter twenty times, but that was not the way to be honest.

Lady Charlotte had no rival but the library, and she soon had the satisfaction to put that rival under her feet, for Harry came there now not to read, but play at chess in it, and this grew to such a head that even the Philosopher, wrapt up as he was in reading and meditation, took notice of it:—and vastly fond she grew of chess for one reason or another, and took great pains too, to give her her due, to get mistress of it, because, perhaps, the better she played, the longer the games lasted, and the longer, of course, she kept Harry near her; and suppose, while they were playing, their fingers interfered at times, in a hurry, in moving the men about, who could help that? nobody: or, when she was pondering over the board, if Harry stared at her face, or, when Harry pondered too, in his turn, she stared at his, what could be done in such a case? nothing.

Matters being now come to an end in regard to George Grove, she was invited to come and stay at Hindermark by Mrs. Grove, in token of reconciliation, after what had passed, though nobody there knew what a hand her ladyship had in breaking off the match.

This invitation she willingly accepted, in hopes that Lord George and the baronet might be made some use of, to force a declaration from the bashful Harry Lamsbroke. She made no promise of herself for any time, however, lest Harry might be afraid to face his rivals, and she might lose his beloved company while she staid there. Mrs. Grove, therefore, could not get a lease of her, her ladyship thus reserving notice to quit, if she found her lover did not come after her to Hindermark: but she had soon the gratification to find that Harry could not stay away, but he only came to Hindermark to be made miserable. His lordship and the baronet engrossed the whole of her company and conversation, and poor Harry could do little else but look on and mourn inwardly, while he saw his rivals happy, and himself shut out, for Lady Charlotte neglected him on purpose to force him to declare himself, though it was pain and grief to herself.

She could not help giving him one of her sweet looks and smiles now and then, at one of which one day, poor Harry burst into a flood of tears. They were in the garden at Hindermark, and Lord George and the baronet were making love to Lady Charlotte, and she, a provoking hussy, making herself more gracious with them than ever she had yet done, when Genevieve, who was present, said, "How can you like to talk to those two great fools when Mr. Lamsbroke is here, who never is permitted to talk to you now; his conversation is a river of nectar flowing over sands of pearl and gold, when compared to their muddy nonsense!"

Upon which, her ladyship turned her head, and seeing Harry leaning on Genevieve's arm, gave him so fond a look, that he could not bear it, but actually

burst into tears, and left the party. Lady Charlotte saw it, and felt it as she deserved, her tears served her just right, for they forced their way in spite of her, she contrived to hide them, however, by running away after Harry, saying that she was sure he was taken ill, holding a bottle of salts in her hand so as every body could see it.

Genevieve, who well knew that Harry was extremely in love with her, though she could not penetrate into the dark bosom of Lady Charlotte so far, charitably engaged the attention of the party by taking them to look at the sketch of a cottage, which Mr. Grove had in hand to build for George and Julia, and that in the very meadow, and close by the little grove too which had become famous for their pretty arbour, where the lovers used to meet each other; Mr. Grove having engaged with Mr. Decastro for a long lease of it to that intent.—The sketch lay on the table in a summer-house at some distance, and hither Genevieve drew the whole party, Mr. and Mrs. Grove, George Grove and Julia, Lord George E. and the baronet, Mr. and Mrs. Decastro, Lady Budemere, and, for he had, upon some account, forsaken his dear library, the Philosopher.

The reader, perhaps, may be curious to know how matters went on between Lady Charlotte and her Harry, whom she took it into her head to torment because she loved him. It was some time before she found poor Harry, and she saw him before he saw her, walking in a lonely place among some cypress trees, whose gloomy boughs suited very well the colour of his thoughts. She presently came to him; he started at the sound of her foot upon the gravel-walk, she looked in his face and saw the tears on his cheeks,

"Mr. Lamsbroke," said she—and could get no further, for she could not command herself, but burst into tears. Harry saw this, though she did what she could to hide her eyes, talking about flies getting into them, and the like foolish excuses.

"What is the matter, Lady Charlotte," said he, "it gives me the greatest pain in the world to see you weep? what has happened? what can I do to comfort you? tell me, what?"

What a fool he must have been to have asked such a question! Lady Charlotte could not get the better of her tears for the heart of her, mad as she was with herself for letting Harry see so much. Harry pitied her though she did not deserve it. She held out the smelling bottle to him, like one that fain would be doing something, and not knowing what to do. Harry took it and gently held it to her nose. Every little kindness on Harry's part made matters worse, she still wept and was totally silent. The cunning baggage was for once without a shift, no trick, no excuse occurred, but she was in kinder hands a great deal than she deserved. Harry saw, or he must be blind indeed, what was the matter, and put his trembling hand into his pocket for his letter; but, alas, it was not to be found! He felt in another pocket with the like success. Lady Charlotte guessed at what he felt for, and was in a tumult of joy expecting the letter! in vain—and if it had been in Harry's pocket at the time, it were odds but the touch of it had so burned his fingers that he could not have taken a hold of it sufficient to have drawn it out. However, so far his honour was saved, he had lost the letter out of his pocket: and this should be a warning to folks not to carry letters about

in their pockets in this manner. Harry still had a tongue in his head, if he could but have made any use of it; stupid thing! how he stood with a lovely woman melted into tears before him! this comes of modesty in a man! The ladies, to give them their due, are getting rid of it as fast as they can, to set the other sex a better example. Ah, how fondly did her ladyship look into Harry's eyes through her tears! Ah, what would she have given at that tender moment to have been clasped to his bosom! He had better been hanged than have teased her so, if it was but to have shown how fast Lady Charlotte would have run to cut him down! What fools love makes of people! Harry, a young fellow of very bright parts, could not speak a word for his heart. Lady Charlotte, no idiot neither, could only express her thoughts by her tears. Two so much in love with each other as they were could not be expected to say very sensible things, so they began to talk nonsense, as follows:

"Tell me," said he, "what has happened to make you weep?"

"Will you tell me," said she, smiling, "what makes you so sad? My heart is very heavy at times, Mr. Lamsbroke, you see me in one of my weakest moments; but I see tears in your eyes, what makes you shed tears like me?"

"I don't see you so often now," said Harry, with a fine blush, "I miss you sadly in my walks, for you never refused to walk with me, but now I walk by myself and feel sad, I don't know why, if it be not because you are not walking with me, or playing at chess with me."

"Well," said she, "you will see me again soon where

you used to see me, and then we will have some more chess and more walks, Mr. Lamsbroke."

"I am glad to hear that," said he, "but pray don't tell any body how low spirited we have been."

"Hush," said she, "as to that, Mr. Lamsbroke," and away she tript into the house to wash the redness out of her eyes. The moment she was got out of sight, Harry fell diligently to search for his letter, for he was sure that he had it in his pocket when he sat out from the castle, but he had his labour for his pains.

Lord George, who had engrossed a great deal of her ladyship's conversation that day, and conceited himself to be high in grace, uneasy at her ladyship's staying away so long, slipt out of the summer-house unobserved, to look what dragon had swallowed up Lady Charlotte, and, taking his way by some trees, picked up poor Harry's letter, which he had flirted out of his pocket with his handkerchief, or by some other accident. Looking at its direction, he found it to be to Lady Charlotte. Now it came into his lordship's head that he might curry a little favour with her ladyship in this thing, and certainly his lordship's merits had been great if the direction of the letter had looked at all like a man's hand-writing, but as luck would have it it looked like a woman's, or else it were some odds that his lordship had not done as he did, which was as follows, videlicet, seeing her ladyship's window open, he walked directly under it, and, after a toss or two, succeeded in throwing the letter into her room. She caught it up, and, supposing it to be some love-nonsense from him, for it was not the first letter which he had thrown into her apartment, her ladyship threw the

letter out again and shut her window. See what foolish things people do in a hurry!

As soon he was gone, she put up her window again, and, dropping her eyes into a jasmine tree, which grew luckily under it, she saw the letter sticking in it, so, poking her nose out as far as it would go, to see if the coast was clear, she felt some little curiosity just to look what it might contain, and, leaning out, tried to reach it, but could not, though she had like to get past the balance and fall out. The direction happened to be uppermost and she could see very well that it was not Lord George's hand, who used to make broad strokes and spend a great deal of ink in his writing. Harry Lamsbroke's hand was not unknown to her, for he had written out a great many songs, and music, at times, for her ladyship. Staring with all her eyes it came into her head that the direction looked at a distance a good deal like his writing. She called herself a fool for throwing the letter out, and fell to a variety of experiments to fish up the paper, amongst others, she made a little loop at the end of one of her garters, and actually succeeded in bringing it to her fingers' ends, when, like a fish, it dropt off the hook and fell further down in the tree than before, but still lodged in its boughs. Presently she thought of the tongs, which, luckily, a lazy housemaid had left in the fire-place to be ready for the next winter, and putting them and herself too out at the window, took the letter in the tongs, a very fit instrument to take up such a fiery thing, and bringing it to hand, saw, in a moment, the writing on the outside to be Harry's, and knew it, from a little speck of ink, to be the same which she had found in his prayer-book at church and returned to him.

She had opened a good many letters in her life, and some in a great hurry too, but she never opened one so quick as she did this. She found it to be the very thing she so long had sighed for, a proposal from Harry Lamsbroke himself! She read the letter twenty times over, and kissing it as often, put it directly into her bosom: and then, threw herself upon her bed, and wept as heartily as if a man had taken Harry and cut his head off!

Tears of joy never fill a pitcher.—Lady Charlotte cried bitterly for a few minutes and then fell a-laughing, and then she cried again, and laughed again, and was in a comical, or rather a tragi-comical taking: in short, she was so happy that she did not know what to do with herself. There are but few instances of people running mad for joy, her ladyship, however, was within an ace of it. After her first tumults had a little subsided, getting a little calm, her ladyship began to examine the grounds of her happiness and to find it very precarious in many points. In the first place Lord George was a very intimate friend of Sir John Lamsbroke, Harry's father, who had written several letters to Lady Budemere in his lordship's behalf, and, one to herself upon the same business; and, from the manner in which he had taken up his lordship's cause, she was too sure of poor Harry's fate the first moment he was known to be the rival of his father's friend. This was one bitter herb in her cup, and bitter enough of itself without the infusion of any other bitterness. She was at that moment too plagued with the addresses of two men of violent tempers, who would take no refusal, though they had each had one in their turns, holding it to be the grand proof of an ardent passion to take

none, and, as she soon discovered, had formed themselves into a league against her, joined hand in hand to quarrel with all that put in any pretensions to her besides themselves. She trembled therefore for Harry's safety, and her anxiety for the youth whom she loved gave her much uneasiness. She sunk not, however, her natural sprightliness, and Harry's letter kept her swimming, though in troubled waters. She felt so happy she could scarce govern her spirits, and her fancy coined twenty tricks to cheat her persecutors and encourage Harry's love in secret; and to keep it a secret she came to a resolution, first, to make no confidant; this had been an old rule with her; secondly, to write no letters to, or receive any from Harry; thirdly, to make him her scorn and her jest in public. She therefore shut up her writing-box, for she had unlocked it to write an answer to Harry's note, and fell to summon all the courage she was mistress of to get an interview with him, to which Harry's meekness and modesty gave no small furtherance. Her fine brown eyes had now recovered their usual brightness, and her bosom had ceased to pant, for she had been in a great fuss, when she walked to her room window, and, looking out at it, saw Harry searching the garden for his letter, for it was plain enough how Lord George came by it. Seeing him alone, she thought it a good opportunity to go into the garden, but her courage failed her so often that she had unlocked her writing-box, and shut it up again, three or four times, in doubt whether to write or not. At last she walked into the garden to see if the fresh air would give her any strength, but still kept on the opposite side of it to Harry, whom she watched like a cat. She could not resist the pleasure she took

in looking at him, so e'en sat down on a garden chair on purpose to gaze.

Poor Harry! how he bustled about among the rose trees and the flowers, tumbling their leaves and their boughs over to look for his letter which lay, had he but known it! in his Charlotte's bosom. Presently he came out at the end of a walk close by her without seeing her as she sat behind a laurel, and started at the sight of her as if she had been a snake.

"Bless me, Mr. Lamsbroke," said she, "what in the world are you hunting about the garden so for? have you lost any thing?"

Harry blushed, and said he had dropt a letter out of his pocket somewhere in it.

"Whereabouts do you think you dropt it?" said she; "come, I will help you look for it, I am lucky at finding things."

"O dear Lady Charlotte, I would not have you take any trouble about it for the world!" said he, in some confusion.

"Come," said she, "I am determined to look for it, so tell me which way you have been looking, and we will take different ways."

Harry opposed her with increased confusion, when she jumped up, and said, "She had set her heart upon finding his letter, and search she would in spite of him." Harry, scarcely knowing what he did, caught her by the arm, and, in a little struggle between him and Lady Charlotte, his letter jumped out of her bosom. Harry saw it stick there some time before it dropt, but only seeing its edge, the rest being concealed by part of her left breast and her tucker, he did not know what paper it might

be, but as soon as it fell on the ground he knew it in a moment!

Lady Charlotte was not quite prepared for this, but courage sometimes comes unexpectedly. Harry caught up the letter and found it had been opened. If he had not felt so much, the silly figure he made were quite ridiculous.

"I confess," said she, "I have taken the liber—hem, hem, taken the liberty to, to, to open your letter, for it was directed to me, you know, and who should, hem, open it but the person to whom, to whom, to whom it was directed?"

Harry's face was in one moment as red as crimson, and then as white as ashes, and he trembled from head to foot till his teeth chattered in his head. Not knowing what he did he let the paper fall out of his hand again on the ground. Lady Charlotte caught it up in a moment and put it into her bosom! surely this were enough to have given a man courage if any thing could! Her ladyship, perhaps, hardly knew what she was doing when she did it, for they were both in a mighty flutter: she certainly, however, was more at home in this business than he was, having been so much in the habit of receiving letters of proposals from so many, and use hardens one to any thing. She recovered her senses presently, and, seeming to collect strength out of poor Harry's weakness, for he would have dropped on the ground but for the kind help of a dead stump which supported Harry and a honeysuckle tree at the same time, spoke thus:

"I have, I own, opened your letter, which Lord George picked up, and must needs throw in at my window; so, you see, Mr. Lamsbroke, what an escape we

have had." Her ladyship still continued to falter and hesitate, and Harry stood like a fool biting his lips, and twisting a honeysuckle between his fingers. Now as fear in one hath sometimes the strange effect of giving another courage, Lady Charlotte, after a hem or two, and a feigned cough, proceeded: "I am extremely afraid that you will think I have too much confidence in what I am going to say, but the having been so much engaged of late in matters of this sort, I am in hopes will account to you for my being able to speak at all upon the subject of your letter: fear not, Mr. Lamsbroke, you are not fallen into unkind hands"—she was forced to stop at times to pick her words,—“Fear not my displeasure,” continued she, “for you have not done any thing which I disapprove.”

Harry looked at her at these words, and, like a great baby, fell a-crying. This gave her ladyship new matter.

“I am sorry,” said she, “to see you so much affected, Mr. Lamsbroke, I beg of you not to vex yourself upon what has happened, you shall have little cause to weep if it is in my power to give you any comfort: I am not angry with you, indeed I am not.”

This made poor Harry cry worse than before, and Lady Charlotte’s soft bosom was too much touched to refrain from tears on her part, and so she e’en cried for company. These their mutual tears brought on, as it were like, some little fond things between them which gave both equal confidence, and led to further conversation, which grew easier on Harry’s part though mixed with blushes and timidity, that had an effect which Harry little expected, however, for one of his prime beauties in Lady Charlotte’s eyes was his great modesty and timid manners, disgusted, as she continually

was, with the overbearing and audacious impudence of such as took it into their heads to sue for her favours with little else to recommend them. Harry's diffidence held her admiration at all times, but it had, at this moment, a peculiar estimation in it, she could speak her sentiments the more freely, which, as they lay very much in his favour, would have been taken undue advantage of by some of less merit and more boldness.

"Mr. Lamsbroke," said she, "we will get a little further from the house, come with me." Upon which she led him beyond the garden and the plantations into a distant meadow, in the midst of which grew a spreading oak, where, having arrived, they sat down at its foot on the grass; here her ladyship was sure to be safe, for none could come near them without being seen, which would not have been the case in a wood. "Mr. Lamsbroke," then said she, "I have my fears lest you should think me too bold, but necessity must plead my excuse for what I shall say, I have some days since received a letter from my uncle, your father, which I will first read to you before I add another word;" she then took a letter from her pocketbook and read as follows:

MY DEAREST NIECE: I take up my pen to write in behalf of a friend. It is some time since I have heard of Lord George's proposals, rejected indeed, as I have understood, by you at your father's request, who had engaged himself with Mr. Grove before his lordship sent his last note, which engagement could not certainly be broken by a man of honour—I was therefore silent, and advised my friend to think no more of you; he said that he would do his best to get the better of his attachment, though he was sure that he should love you as long as he lived; he spoke these words upon his honour—happily for him the match intended between you and Mr. Grove's son is now, very unaccountably I

must own, broken off, I must now, therefore, use my whole interest with you in my friend's behalf, and do assure you, my dear niece, as a mark of the love I feel for him, that if even my own son were to make you an offer, much as I value his merits, and great as your fortune is, I do assure you that I not only would not give my consent to his robbing my dearest friend of the woman whom he loves above the world and all its beauties; but, if he persisted in his attempts to get possession of you against my orders, upon my honour and upon my soul, good boy as he is, I would disinherit him, and turn him destitute into the world to beg his way to his grave.—I do insist upon it, my dearest niece, that you will not refuse my friend, he is a truly noble fellow, as well by nature as by title and rank, his fortune and estates are ample, his merits great and many, and he adores you above all women upon earth.

I remain, my dearest niece,

Your most affectionate uncle,

JOHN LAMSBROKE.

Lamsbroke Park, June 12th.

Harry was greatly affected at this letter. "Pray," said he, wiping his eyes, "what answer did you send to it, Lady Charlotte, if I may take so great a liberty as to ask you?—I hope you will not be angry with me for asking, though I am affraid I have done a very bold thing."

"I have a copy of it here," said her ladyship, "and will read it to you: I hope you will not take too much advantage of my making you my confidant, Mr. Lamsbroke," added she, with a sweet smile, the poignancy of which made Harry's heart tingle as if it had been stung by a nettle!—she then took another paper out of her pocketbook and read as follows:

MY DEAR UNCLE: If you love your friend as sincerely as you say, I am sure you would not have me do

him any injury, which I must do if I give him any the least encouragement: I will tell you the plain truth, my affections are wholly engaged, and I never will give my consent to make a man of so much merit as you hold out Lord George to be, completely miserable. Upon this ground I have again refused him, and I will go so far as to say, that unless I can obtain him on whom my whole heart is fixed, I will, I most solemnly declare to you, die unmarried. What your reasons may be for throwing out such a terrible menace on your son, I know not, but I hope for your excuse, my dearest uncle, when I say, that I think you have used him very ill in it.

I remain, my dear uncle,
Your very affectionate niece,
CHARLOTTE ORBY.

Hindermark, June 16th.

Harry's face, which had been very much flushed for some time, now glowed with a deeper red than ever, and raising his eyes, which he had scarce dared yet to do, to Lady Charlotte's, she dropt her face on her bosom painted all over with vermilion. Harry must be very dull indeed not to see what was the matter with her ladyship, but his diffidence still kept him in doubt; his modesty so blinded his eyes that he could not see what a happy man he was. 'Tis no wonder the ladies should hate such a vice in a man when it gives them such a world of trouble! Poor Lady Charlotte! she was so provoked at seeing him still in doubt that she could have boxed his ears. It was all her own fault, she might have had impudent fellows plenty who would have had quickness of apprehension enough, and self-conceit enough too, not to have given her half the trouble—but Harry was richly worth her pains if he had given her ten times as much: well, it is fit that the

best things cost the most, and, when a thing is worth a pound who should buy it for a penny? When Lady Charlotte dropt her blushing face on her bosom, Harry might have taken her and put her in his pocket, and walked away with her if he pleased—but, thought he, surely, it cannot be myself that she hints at in her answer to my father—my merits are surely too small to deserve so much. There was a little silence, and Lady Charlotte played with a cowslip. What would Lord George, what would the baronet St. Clair have given to have been in Harry's place at that moment! Harry's face was so flushed, and he looked so excessively handsome, that Lady Charlotte was afraid to look that way, and so she played with a cowslip that grew at her side. Harry, by accident turned his eyes towards her to look what it was she was doing, when sitting rather on the advantage ground, and being tall too, he dropt his eyes into her bosom and saw his letter in it.

"My letter is very happy, Lady Charlotte," said he, "to be where it is."

Lady Charlotte smiled, with her eyes downcast upon the cowslip, for she did not look up, perhaps, for fear of frightening Harry's eyes away, knowing very well what pretty shy things they were.

"May I dare to hope," said he, "that it did not come into the place where it is, by accident, but by—by—by—favour?"

She smiled again with a blush, still looking at the flower.

"Happy letter," continued he, "if it came there by favour!" at this there was another smile, but there was no occasion for another blush for the old one served very well. "O Lady Charlotte," said he, "if I could

but know if you ever put such a letter in the same place before!"—Upon which she shook her head and turned her face quite away, so that he could not see a bit of it. "Dear Lady Charlotte," then said he, "how kind you are to my letter, and you cannot be kind to that without being kind to me."

She was very quiet and very silent, for she was too much delighted to make any noise, but she had twirled the poor cowslip all to pieces, and hardly knew what to do with her fingers, so she dropped one hand in the grass, a cool place, close by Harry, while the other held the two letters: what could she mean by letting one hand lie idle there?—Harry looked at it, it had no glove upon it, it looked beautifully white as it lay on the dark-green grass!—Now, whether he thought it was put there on purpose, or whether he might safely steal it while she looked another way, and she none the wiser, Harry took up her pretty fingers off the cold ground, and, pressing them gently in his hand, said, "Dear Lady Charlotte, I am afraid there will be no favour for me; O if I could but know there was any, if it was but the least of a little!"—and, taking advantage of her averted face, added, with a sigh, "Nobody ever loved anybody better than I do—somebody." She still remained silent with her face turned quite away from him, but, for some reason, she did not snatch her hand out of Harry's, as he had seen her do when either Lord George, or the baronet, or any other man had seized upon it; but she remained silent, and sat as quiet as a mouse, and, though it charmed her beyond expression to hear the man whom she loved make love to her, yet she could not help feeling pity for what he felt in the struggles between his love and his diffidence. But

she had a good deal of spite in her for all that, and was determined to be revenged on him for having teased her so long, and leaving it to accident at last to bring her his note, and, but for the said accident, had teased her half a year longer perhaps; so she held her tongue, like a cunning puss, to feast her ears, that loved sweet things as well as any girl's ears in the world, though she could have talked fast enough if she had had a mind to interrupt him.

Certainly these were some of the happiest moments of her life, and the most prudish could not blame her for making the best of them, when it is considered that what gave them their highest relish was, that the pleasure she felt was innocent. Harry, now taking courage from her bashfulness as she had lately done from his, leaned a little over her to get a sight of her face, upon which she started a little, for she thought he was going to kiss her, he had not a thought, however, of taking so great a liberty, though he, whom she was determined to make her husband, might have done it and been forgiven.

"My dear Lady Charlotte," said he, "pray tell me one thing,—is the person who now sits by your side, he whom you so kindly alluded to in your letter to my father? tell me, pray tell me, give me some sign of what you cannot speak, let this dear hand, which I now hold in mine, speak for you." She turned her back to him and her head quite away, so that he could only see a bit of her ear, just as if she had not a mind to see what her hand did which was at that time quite behind her, and gently squeezed Harry's hand that held her's. Now the wonder is what the ladies will say to Lady Charlotte for doing such a shocking thing as that?

but her ladyship might have suffered a little spasmodic affection, just at that moment, which contracted her fingers a little.—Well, women are made, amongst other things, to delight a man's heart, and they certainly now and then answer that purpose to admiration. Confound the toads! Old Crab used to say, it is nothing but their impudence makes them modest! for they and the devil very well know it to be the surest way to get hold of the men.

Lady Charlotte and Harry had now convinced each other of their mutual affection, for, by the gentle squeeze which she gave Harry's hand, he had no longer any doubt, diffident as he was, that he was the happy man alluded to in her ladyship's letter to his father. This grand preliminary being settled, Lady Charlotte apprized him with how much secrecy they must at present act; he had some very formidable rivals, one of whom had all his father's interest, who was quite the sort of man to put his menaces in execution upon the terms named in his letter.

"None, therefore, must know, Mr. Lamsbroke, what engagements we may form together," said her ladyship; "be you prepared for any face which I may choose to put on before others; we will write no more letters, for letters, you see, may be lost, none must know but ourselves what has passed this evening, no, not our most intimate friends; be you but silent, leave the rest to me, and I will set discovery at defiance. The cruel threat, Mr. Lamsbroke, in your father's letter, I regard not, for some reasons which I will not now disclose; I can turn it to our advantage:—I shall put on a strange face remember, a very different one from that which I now wear," said she, smiling fondly in his

eyes. Harry took her hand and softly pressed it between his, when a solemn bell was heard at some distance—"That's my uncle's bell," said she, "I suppose he has a funeral this evening."

"Yes," said Harry, "it is poor farmer Cartland's son, who, in a fit of insanity, threw himself into a well; it is he that is to be buried this evening."

"I hope, I hope," said her ladyship, putting her hand upon Harry's arm a little eagerly, "his distraction did not come from his affair with Julia?"

"Indeed, but it did," said Harry, "his attachment to Julia was the cause of it."

"O, Mr. Lamsbroke," said she, with tears in her eyes, "how much I pity that poor young man! poor man! what must he have felt, what must he have suffered before he came to this! This must make poor Julia's heart ache too in the midst of all her joys."

"This thing has been kept a secret from her," said he, "and that is the cause of her invitation to Hindermark, she was invited to be there to be out of the way of it."

"At what distance are we now from Hindermark," said she, "will not Julia hear the bell?"

"We must be at least two miles," said he, "from Hindermark; my uncle Bat preaches a funeral sermon on this occasion, shall we walk on and attend the funeral? I am always pleased with my uncle Bat's sermons."

"Why," said Lady Charlotte, "I don't like weeping, but if you desire it I will go along with you."

"Come then," said Harry, "let us put on a good pace, for I am sure the instruction which we shall re-

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ceive from my uncle Bat's sermon will repay us richly for our tears."

"Can you tell me the particulars of this sad event?" said she.

"I can," said Harry; "come, I will tell you the melancholy story as we walk along, if you love tragedies it will suit you, for it is a story full of woe."

"Why," said she, "I own that I have rather a turn for comedy than tragedy, but I shall like to hear you tell me the story nevertheless, for there is always one comfort in a sad story, the pleasure that comes from a comparison of our happier lot with the miseries of others." Saying which, she gave Harry another sweet smile, and observed the tears on his rosy cheeks.

"O Lady Charlotte," said Harry, "you smile at my weakness, but I know, from my own feelings, how to feel for this poor young man, I do indeed, and cannot help——" Harry could get no further, but hid his face in his handkerchief. If Lady Charlotte could have done as she would, she had flung her snowy arms about Harry's neck, and kissed him for his tender-heartedness.

OLD CRAB'S FUNERAL SERMON

PREACHED AT

THE BURIAL OF JOHN CARTLAND.

WRITTEN BY GEORGE GROVE.

"Man is cut down like a Flower of the Field."

This comparison suits very well with my present purpose: the man whom we now put into the earth was cut down in the flower of life, and upon this I shall argue as follows; first, the shorter man's life is, the

better; secondly, the sooner men prepare for death, the better; and thirdly, the less we lament those who are gone before us, the better. And, first, the shorter man's life is, the better, for his troubles are shorter too, and, no man, I think, can well complain of that. We often hear men complain of too many troubles but none of too few. If we ask a man whether he would choose twenty years of misery or forty, one would think him beside his wit if he chose the longer term, and, I think, with good reason; but yet, if any one were to be asked whether he would choose a long life or a short one, and he chose the short one, we should think him beside his wits too: now there must be an error somewhere in this thing, and it may make for our advantage to look for it.

A man is born to trouble, saith Job,* as sure as the sparks fly upwards, for so I think the Hebrew should be translated; for I suppose there is none of us who will take upon him to contradict that. Trouble therefore we must find in the world; it is an enemy which we must meet and contend with as long as we stay in it. Life is a state of warfare, not of peace; truces there may be in it, but never peace, and those, too, very few and very short. It appears then that we must all meet trouble and contend with it, that we all do so needs no argument to prove it here. In this war many fall early sacrifices, like the poor young man who now lies dead before us: some stand it out for many years and still get the better of their wounds, and still fight on, until old age joins hands with the common enemy, and very

*"Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward" (*Job* v. 7). Both the Authorized and Revised versions agree in giving this reading.—*Editor's Note.*

soon makes it a matter of irresistible odds. What shall we say then? is it good to live in an eternal scuffle? in continual bickerings? under perpetual bruises? as soon as, and sometimes sooner than one wound is healed, to get another, and often in the same gash too? what keeps us all in love with anguish thus? or, am I in an error, and it be true that we are not fond of pain? but if we are fond of life we must needs take pain into the account, for with life it comes and to life it sticks as long as life lasts. Then the shorter life is the better, for we cannot get rid of pain until we do get rid of life, do what we will: pains and troubles either of the mind, the canker that ate out this poor young man's heart, or of the body, which few men are strangers to, goad and scourge us through the world, and, one would think, would make us glad to make haste through it.

What if we were forced to stop in our way? if we were tied up to be lashed? what if we could not get into our graves out of the reach of the whip if we would? what if we were held for a hundred years at a time to be flogged without being permitted to take one step all that time towards the quiet tomb? Let such as would choose long lives think on that: let them think how glad they would be to have their cords untied, and with what joy they would make the best of their way to their sepulchre where the bitter scourge cannot follow them. This were some matter of consideration; ease after pain is certainly something, and a precious something too, men would not be so over-fond of life, if this matter were well weighed, as they are; and it were an argument with them, one would think, to get prepared to die, to be ready at a moment's call,

and listen with eager expectation for their names to be named. How St. Paul wishes to be with his Master! hear what he says on this matter, "If in this life only we had hope, we should be of all men the most miserable!" Of whom doth he speak? Of Christians: of those very men whose blessed estate bids the fairest of all others for happiness: of those whom Christ, of those whom the Holy Ghost descended from heaven itself to save and to comfort! Now, if we will take St. Paul's word for it, a short life were better, or why should he wish to be with Christ? Why weep we then over this untimely bier? why do we say, "alas my brother!" why mingle we our tears with the flowers that are scattered on his grave? Is he not where St. Paul so much wished to be? The moral and religious excellence of his life bid fairly for it, my good friends. These hands made a Christian soldier of him, and from this place have we handed him down the armour to protect him in the battle: God's will be done. If he be content to take the young warrior so soon out of the conflict, why need we lament? why grieve that his contest should be so short? Who could be glad to see him linger here? Our youth lose an example, it is true; that is a loss, and a grievous loss when goodness is so scarce as it is: but let bad men tremble, and be thankful that they are not called to their account, so much less fit to meet their account than he; that they have more time allowed, if they please, to have their faults whipped out of them; but a man cannot live too short a time that is fit to go to heaven; and why?—wherefore should a good man live in troubles? if ripe for heaven why not be gathered? Let God pick and choose where he pleases amongst us—why contest the matter?

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for to grieve at what God does, is a kind of contest with him. If a short life were unfit, we should all live to be very old, but since more die that are not grown old than are, the cast is against long lives, and it is God's will that fewer should live to be very old, and that, it is like, out of compassion for our sufferings in this world, which are sharp and manifold; and what a merciful thing it is in our Heavenly Father to knock off the bolts and shackles of the flesh! to set the suffering soul free from its prison! to take the spirit to himself and put it out of the reach of trouble! But the loss of friends we must needs call a misfortune, and death a grief:—and yet why should it be a grief? must we needs always fall in with the ways and errors of the world, and call griefs what the world calls griefs? Death, which the world calls a grief, can do no good man ill:—ill! it is the way to his reward: death is the door that lets him into heaven.—Why should we grudge at this? why should we grudge at a good man's being made eternally happy? that he is taken out of the stone's throw of misfortune? that his soul is sifted from the dust of this earth? that he joins the company “of saints, and good men made perfect?”

But it is said that when a man is taken out of the world he can do no more good in it, that his widow, perhaps, and his orphans are left to shift for themselves, who were supported by his industry, and protected by his arm:—be it said, and be it answered, that when he goes out of the world he does not take the providence of God out of the world along with him; in what better hands can he leave all that is dear to him on earth than in the hands of providence? God, who calls him from his post, can set another watch at it; and if his widow

and his orphans take care to do what God bids them, there will no harm come to them until God breaks his word with them, which will never be. A good man is gone, and, to use the language of the world, we shall see him no more: not on earth it is true, we cannot expect that, nor ought we to wish it for his sake and for our own: for his sake,—for which of his friends would lend a hand to pull him back again into a world of troubles? for our own,—for what pain and grief would it be to us to see him banished from the realms of bliss into a place which is none other than the house of wo and bitterness? Could we bear, upon his return to it, to hear his lamentations for a moment? For what must a man feel at such a change? to be taken out of heaven and committed to this earth, as it were to a house of correction, to be torn away from the society of saints and angels, and cast down amongst a gang of thieves, slanderers, fornicators, drunkards, murderers, blasphemers, miscreants, and adulterers? would not this be to plunge him into hell?

Who then can complain of too short a life, shouldered on all sides by such reprobates as these? A good man lies in this vile world like a pearl in the mud: how unfit a place, my friends, for one who is fit for heaven! Such a one is not at home on earth, he is here a stranger, he belongs to heaven!—Now if it please God to send his angel down to pick out what is worthy of heaven amongst us, why, the sooner heaven takes its own the better: and if we are in no mind to lose a good friend, or a good relation for ever, let us look about us, quit our sins, purify our lives, and make all ready to follow him and meet him in heaven. Few will deny, I think, that the sooner this happens to any of us the

better, which brings me to the second division of my discourse, that is to say, a speedy preparation for quitting this world of clouds, for, indeed, there is little sunshine here. Let us then set our houses in order, that when death comes he may find that we have nothing to do but to go with him at a moment's warning; that he may find us ready dressed for our journey and waiting for him; yes, ready dressed—all our filthy sins cast off, and evil habits discarded, and our wedding garments upon us, and in our best array to meet the bridegroom, of whom the Scripture speaks. Take heed to my words, my good friends, there will be no hanging back at that time, go we must whether we be clean or unclean, whether we be in a wedding garment or in dirty rags. Let us all remember that no unclean thing can enter the palace of heaven. If we are still in our sins we shall be flung into hell from the threshold of God's house; if death come and find us wrapped up in our wickedness, we shall be cast afar off, where neither star nor sun-light reaches, into a place where the vengeance of the Almighty rolls in black clouds of smoke mixed with eternal fires. Thus, indeed, the Scriptures image out the place of torment, but what is meant by the undying worm, and by the ever-burning flame, we know not, but it must certainly be something very terrible which these things are made to stand for, and a very faint resemblance, it is like, of the hideous original, which no man in his senses, one would think, would choose to see.

The case is this:—a man may, if he pleases, escape eternal punishment, he may, if he hath a mind, go to heaven. Heaven and hell are held out to his choice: if he, by the smiles of vice, is tempted into hell it is his

own fault; if, by the buoyancy of virtue, he is raised to heaven, it will be set down to his merit, and his reward will be great. If a man be asked, whether he would choose hell or heaven? we know his answer very well; but how comes it to pass that he will not put himself in the way to get that thing which he would like the best of the two? Here come in a man's sins, and push him out of the road, and into hell, when he would put himself forward on the way to heaven. Now, if he is so great a fool as not to contest the matter with his sins, what is it but to say that heaven is not worth a man's fighting for? now the best preparation for death is to fight manfully against the devil, this is to fight the good fight spoken of in Scripture, and it is for victory in this battle that the crown, also named in Scripture, is held out. But the reward is at a great distance, we may say, and the battle is at hand; yet we may say this without being at all able to prove it, for "this night our souls may be required of us," as the Scripture says, and then the reward is not at a great distance, but very near us, and may be still nearer for any thing we know of the matter.

A man, therefore, who will not fight on is a fool, or a coward, or both, for the very conditions on which we take our existence is to breast it out against difficulties, dangers, sin, and the devil. What an idiot must he be who will fight, till he dies, for an earthly reward, which he must part with too, if he lives to get it; and will not fight till death for a heavenly reward, which, if he gets it, nothing can take from him, not even death itself, even if he dies in the conflict, which would deprive him of the earthly thing which he fights for to all intents and purposes; what an idiot, I

say, must such a one be! and who but a fool would call him wise? The hazard a man runs by cutting off his preparation for death, if at all considered, would terrify the stoutest heart. Put the case thus: I am very well to-day, I never was in better health in my life, but yet I cannot count the value of one moment upon to-morrow, for, as the Scripture says, "A man knows not what a day may bring forth:" yet, behold all things lie about me at sixes and sevens, I drink, I game, I swear, I lie, I steal, I blaspheme, I commit fornication, I commit adultery, I bear false witness, I fight duels and commit murder, and all this, when by this hour to-morrow I may stand at the bar of heaven with such a load of sins as this upon my shoulders!

Why, would not a man deserve to be put into hell for a month, or for any given time, and thank any one who would do it if it would bring him to his senses, that chooses, for it is his choice, to go on day after day in this manner without "taking any thought for the morrow," as the Scripture says? "Sufficient for the day would indeed be the evil thereof," if a man were to be cast into hell, in it, I suppose, or he would have such an appetite for evil that might surprise any body!

We are all of us sinners: we go on making false step after false step, and the very best of us can do no more than sin and repent by turns, and, as soon as our tears have washed one spot away, comes another, and a blacker perhaps than any yet repented of.—But yet, kind mercy receives the golden censer, with the sweet incense of sorrow burning, at the hands of our great Intercessor, who, if he sees us err yet sees us weep for our errors, propitiates him who sent him to save us. Let us weep then, not for the dead, but for the living;

(which brings me to the third and last division of my sermon;) not because this good young man is gone to heaven so soon, but for our sins, which will bar our meeting with him once again, and that never to be parted. A tear for the dead is an honour to his tomb; if it be a debt let us pay it and have done with it. Tears, it is true, give ease to the heart, but we must fight against the disease, or tears may fail to cure it. Sorrow is an enemy both to the soul and the body, it is one of those passions which we must meet in the field aforesaid, we must oppose it manfully if we look to oppose it effectually: it cannot long stand its ground before the true soldier; it is a foe that must be grappled withal;—but many die of grief, there are some for whom sorrow is too strong. Here lies before us, alas, a sad instance of it, one into whose brain grief brought a fatal phrensy which pushed him on, not knowing what he did, to self-destruction!—This is true: but it gives additional force to my argument, for the more potent our foe the stronger armour must we put on to meet him. If we are conquered, and notwithstanding fought our best, we have done our duty, and shall be met at the gates of heaven, by angels attuning this hymn to their harps, “Come, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of our Lord!”

It may be asked, how can we better show our love for our friend, than by our sorrow for his loss? It were well to ask in return, whether he be lost or not? If he be gone to heaven, one cannot well say that he is lost: we must look to be sure that he is lost, or we may grieve when we ought to rejoice; if we are not sure that he is lost we grieve at an uncertainty: now if we grieve at the death of a friend, we may grieve for some

change for the better and not for the worse, which were an absurdity, because it is always matter of congratulation, and not of sorrow, that a good thing hath befallen any of our friends; our friends are the strings which tie us to the earth, cords that bind us to this world of wo, still as they die off, tie after tie is cut in twain, till we ourselves get loose, and wing our way more joyfully to heaven. That is the place wherein, the Scriptures tell us, to lay our treasure up; and, tell me, my good brethren, in what better place can we put our friends? But alas! to hear the sad bell toll for a child that's gone, to note the parting pang of the father or mother, the last farewell, the kiss, the touch of the cold hand,—the last look while the fading eye yet holds its sense, fixed with eager gaze and closing, on those friends it loved, for ever!—what a bitter hour is such an hour as this!

It is, and must be bitter, and it would be sad indeed, if bitter things were not wholesome too. Our sorrows are our schoolmasters here, they spare no rod and never spoiled a child. They take much evil from us but never robbed us of any good thing when put to their right uses. They take much evil from us, for sorrow is a check to sin, it takes away a man's appetite for wicked deeds, it abates that pride of heart which fits it for the worst of mischiefs. Sorrow seasons it and stops corruption in it; sorrow is the salt of the soul and keeps it sweet; a mind garrisoned by sorrows resists temptation. Why then, it may be asked, if sorrow be of such use, how can it be said that the shorter our sorrows are, the better? It is answered, that sorrow should be our medicine but not our food: too much of the best medicines will defeat the very end of medicine and bring disease. Temperance prescribes the quantity of grief, a

virtue to be called in in this our case, and teach us by what rules it should be governed, how much may be taken to do us good, where excess in it begins, and what must be its limits. There is as much danger in the excess of grief, as in an excess of strong liquors, a certain quantity of the latter is a cordial, too much intoxicates and weakens us; a certain degree of sorrow is only required even in repentance, we need not always weep to be forgiven even of God himself for our sins. Let us then, my friends, hold our hands a little in this sad case. We must not weep longer for the loss of a child than for the loss of our integrity; for a very serious consideration follows, sorrow too long indulged becomes a sin, and then we must sorrow to be forgiven even for our sorrows: it is very wrong in us to receive the dispensations of Providence with pouting and fretting, and if any thing of this sort is an ingredient in our sorrows it is very blamable indeed. A tender regard for our children is no sin, it were a fault in us not to feel it if they deserve it, it is one of those sweet sympathies planted by God in our hearts which is not only consistent with, but strengthened by reason and religion: but be it remembered, that our children are the free gift of God, and we must deserve them, if we would keep them, but God may take them from us if we deserve to keep them too, and this sometimes happens, as, I think, it does in this case. Be it remembered, that, as in Abraham's case who made offer to return his only son to God who gave him, we must willingly bid adieu to any child whom God is pleased to call for, with this consolation, that he may be wanted to fill some place in heaven. I would not be thought, my dear friends, to insult your sorrows, as is not infrequently

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the case, by calling the cause of your grief a trifle. This is none other than to call a man a fool for his pains, and set down his sorrows to the score of weakness and folly. To lose a favourite child is one of the greatest of human calamities, but yet let us take notice, that the greater any calamity is that befalls us, the greater merit hath our resignation too, in our acquiescence to the divine will. "Let us make ourselves friends out of our calamities, and misfortunes, that when we fall they may receive us into everlasting habitations."

Come then, my good friends, let us wipe away our tears, let us bury our sorrows with the deceased in the grave. If he could speak to us out of the clouds, it would be the first advice he would give us, for such was his advice until his intellect became a ruin, and his senses were destroyed. A tender regard to his memory I well know that he would have us cherish, but to see us nurse our grief, that scorpion of the soul, would give him pain in proportion to his love for us. Let us set him in our presence, and do nothing that would grieve him if he were conscious of our actions; he himself fell a victim to sorrow, how then were it likely that he should approve that very thing in us which did him so much hurt? There is one thing which we ought to take notice of, and that is, that the better a man is, the better he takes consolation. The bad man, if any, is the inconsolable man, because he can have the least title to the best of all other consolations, namely, religious consolation: for religion, instead of pouring comfort into his wounds, fills his mind with terror and dismay, so much so, that he does all he can to get it out of his thoughts, as the most unwelcome intruder

there, conscious that he is rather a fit object of its vengeance than its consolation: but this by the way. To return: no man, one would think, would deny, that the shorter our sorrows are the better, because sorrow is no very pleasant thing, and who would not get rid of an unpleasant thing as soon as he could? When I say the shorter our sorrows are the better, I mean no dishonour to the dead, or to say that he is not worth a tear, for then my advice were given where it was not wanted, for there is no need to tell any body not to mourn for what they do not care for. And who laments the worthless? There is no need to check people's tears when none are like to be shed: by no means;—but when the good, I will not say die, but come to an untimely grave, we need advice, every comfort, and every consolation. It is then our sorrows are most apt to exceed bounds; it is then our griefs want a check the most, and the more I insist upon this, the better compliment I pay to the dead. The more we strive to get the better of our grief for the deceased, the greater the contest with our sorrows, the more we honour the departed, for it serves only to prove the strength and violence of our wo.

To come nearer to ourselves, we see in the sad instance upon the bier, how hurtful grief is to our bodies, and what ills it brings on them. It hath the power, if not checked, to seize on the brain itself, to overturn the throne of reason, and throw the soul into confusion: not to advert to the old topics, that sorrow for the dead can be of no use to the living; that no tear will recal the fleeting spirit. I shall now conclude with putting you in mind that religion is the only sovereign balm for the wounded heart; there may be other remedies, but

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this is the best of them all, and for this reason, it gives us to understand, that though the deceased hath left us, we have not lost him, that if we do our duty as well as he did here, we shall meet him again; that this young flower, that only staid to show us its blossom here, is not withered and dead, but only transplanted into Paradise. Into which happy place, that we may all be transplanted too, may God, of his infinite mercy grant, to whom, with the Holy Ghost and our Saviour Jesus Christ, be ascribed all honour, praise, majesty and dominion, from this time forth for evermore. Amen.

END OF OLD CRAB'S SERMON ON JOHN CARTLAND

CHAPTER II*

In Continuation.

BUT we must now leave Harry and his mistress on their way to Oaken Grove, and return to the party at Hindermark, where the reader may well imagine that the absence of her ladyship was not borne with much patience by Lord George and the baronet: and it growing near to Mr. Grove's time for their tea and coffee, Genevieve and the philosopher, Lord George and the baronet all took different ways amongst the gardens and the shrubberies to look for Lady Charlotte. Genevieve first ran up stairs to her ladyship's apartment, where she used at times to spend an hour in retirement, for she had a way of getting a good deal out of society of late, but found the door locked, which, indeed, was no new thing, for she always locked her room door whether in it, or not in it, and none knew if she was in it, for she would not answer at times when she was in it; this Genevieve knew, and, after a knock, went away.

Lord George said that he had seen her ladyship at her window when they took their walk after dinner, but had not seen her since that time; so the four persons aforesaid went out a-hunting for Lady Charlotte, and it was Lord George's good fortune to find the game. He met her and Harry, on their return from Oaken Grove.

"How far has your ladyship been walking?" said he, casting a look of some displeasure on Harry; "you do

*The confusion in the numbering, though not in the sequence, of this and the following chapters, seems to be intentional, and done, *à la Sterne*, for whimsical effect.—*Editor's Note.*

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this young gentleman, I think, too much honour to prefer his company to that of all the rest of the party put together."

"Mr. Lamsbroke is a great favourite of mine, my lord," said she, "and I asked him to walk with me to Oaken Grove this evening; and, to tell you the truth, I liked his company and conversation so well, that I shall certainly take another walk with him soon."

"If you do, madam," said his lordship pettishly, "I shall take leave to tell that gentleman that he will please me better if he walks by himself."

"Pray, my lord," said she, "how came you by any authority to prescribe to me with whom I shall walk, or with whom I shall not walk? Your pleasure has very little weight with me, and, I dare say, quite as little with Mr. Lamsbroke, with whom I shall most certainly walk, if I please, without coming to you to say, Pray, my lord, will you give me leave to walk with Mr. Lamsbroke? or, Is it your pleasure that I walk with Sir Henry St. Clair?" Upon which she laughed in his lordship's face, and told him that he gave himself great airs!

"Give me leave to say, madam, that I should feel very little interest in your society if I expressed no regret at seeing it squandered away upon the undeserving," said his lordship.

"If you knew yourself," said she, "you would not feel that regret, if you knew me, you would take care not to express it: but, after all, what can I add to you by being with you, or take from you by being with another?"

"Yourself, madam," said his lordship, "which, like the significant figure, gives a cypher all its value."

"I heard Mr. Lamsbroke say that, when Julia, in a

frolic, ran away from Mr. George Grove; after what you have said of him, I am surprised that you can condescend to borrow his wit, and contract a debt which you will never be able to pay."

"I gives me very little satisfaction," said his lordship, "to hear you praise that young gentleman at all; and, though you may say what you please, I shall drop a hint in his ear that I will not hear him praised by you, madam, at my expense."

"You are a very pleasant sort of person, though not a little fond of quarrelling, if you make one person's commendation the grounds of falling out with another: you are far enough, my lord, from being a wit yourself, it is true, but I did not know till this moment, that you had not good sense enough not to be displeased at it in another."

"To have neither wit nor good sense," said his lordship, "is certainly to be very much a fool, and your ladyship has done me a great deal of honour to tell me so to my face: but the very first moment that a woman finds a man to be her slave, she will not stick to call him a fool when he can so very easily find out the reason why he merits that title of distinction. But I must give that young gentleman, who has just left us, a little good advice about walking; for if he does not walk to please me, I will make him walk out with me where he will not be best pleased to go!" added his lordship angrily.

"This is very fine!" said Lady Charlotte; "I, myself, asked Mr. Lamsbroke to walk with me to Oaken Grove, what he did was done at my instance; if I chose to take him instead of my footman, my lord, what have you to do with that?"

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"What another man takes of your company, madam, I set down as a robbery upon myself."

"A man must take what is your own property, my lord, before he can be said to rob you; my company is not quite that yet, and if I see much of these humours, is not like ever to be."

"Delightful *IF!*" exclaimed his lordship, kneeling down in a puddle, and taking her ladyship's hand, which she snatched from him in a moment, "if there can be any conditions upon which I could ever claim your sweet society for my own, name them, O name them, most lovely of thy sex, and not one change in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* shall be so sudden as mine from what you hate to what you love!"

"You had best go and get clean stockings, my lord, for you have kneeled in a very dirty place," said Lady Charlotte; "and then, I think, I shall like you a little better."

"Am I ever to be put off with some cruel jest?" said he; "for heaven's sake, Lady Charlotte——"

"And for heaven's sake, Lord George," said she, "why will you kneel in a puddle?"

"O most divine of women!" exclaimed he, "I would kneel in the middle of an ocean."

"O most divine of men!" said Lady Charlotte, "do you take me for a duck, that you fall to courting me in a pond of water?"

"I did not know where I was, or what I did," said he—"what can I do? how act? what perform, to purchase me the smallest grace in that lovely bosom?"

"Why," said her ladyship, "in the first place, I lay my injunctions on you to be civil to Mr. Lamsbroke; I insist upon that, my lord, if he walks with me twenty

miles in a day; and, now I think of it, I shall often ask him to walk with me, since you have made such a fuss about it, on purpose to try you: in the second place, I must insist upon it, that you send me no more letters, my window cannot stand open five minutes, without having one scrawl or other thrown in at it."

"A man whose passion," quoth his lordship, "is so ardent as mine, whose soul would cease to think, if not of you, a bosom —"

"Well," said she, "I have heard all this, twenty times over, my lord, and I have told you my mind upon the matter in such a way, that it is impossible to be misunderstood—I will not say that my mind will never change, or how things may be, when I see your lordship in clean stockings, but if you come down in the mud thus, it were better if you came a-courting in boots;" saying which, she ran into the house.

The irresistible influence of the charm had wrought such wonders in the constitution of the beautiful milk-maid, that she had picked up her crumbs, as they say of the chickens, and was now grown as plump as one of her father's barndoor fowls. The bans of marriage had been put up by Old Crab three times, in his church, and a month had now passed since that ceremony. Old Crab and Mr. Grove had settled their plan of provision for their children, the lease of Dairy-Mead was drawn and signed, the workmen had already begun to build the cottage in it, and the little grove, famous for Julia's arbour, was to be walled in with the rest of the pleasure grounds. All this was to be done at Mr. Grove's expense, and the young couple to take up their abode at Hindermark until their house was ready to receive them. This became Mr. and Mrs. Grove's plaything,

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and they were always amusing themselves in Dairy-Mead when the weather permitted them.

George Grove was chasing Julia one day in the shrubberies at Hindermark for a kiss, when Old Crab, coming to Mr. Grove's house, stept behind a Portugal laurel, and saw what they had no mind should be seen; Julia, to give her her due, had run into one of the thickest shades she could find, to hide herself from George perhaps, when he caught the breathless fugitive close by the Portugal laurel that hid Old Crab, and had Julia in his arms, when the old gentleman popped out upon them: "You jade!" quoth Old Crab, "why didn't you run into the house?" and caught her by the arm—George stole away—"Come," said he, "'tis high time you fix your day, or I shall fix one for you, these are fine doings!" Julia panted and held her head down, to hide her blushes. "Name your day this moment, or this day three weeks shall be the day; why don't you speak, wench?"

"If you please, papa," said she.

"Please, indeed!" quoth Old Crab; "I wonder you are not ashamed of yourself, romping about in this manner as if you were mad! a fine idle hussey you are grown, and be hanged to ye, while I am forced to pay one to do all your work for you, you hoiden!"

"Indeed, papa, I should like to go a-milking again as I used to do, now I am got well again, and look to the dairy too—those were happy days, papa: but indeed, papa, I am very happy, very indeed, and very thankful too for all my happiness," falling on her knees before Old Crab, with the tears running down her face.

"Happy," quoth Old Crab, "aye, I don't know what the plague should ail you else, romping about with a

handsome young fellow ! you shall come home and there stay, until the ceremony is over, and see no more of George, until he comes to bring you to church."

Julia looked behind her to see if George was in sight, but she saw no more of him for a long time, not indeed until her wedding-day.

Genevieve had taken it into her head that she should not have any the least objection to be married on the same day with Julia—indeed she set her heart upon it, and left no stone unturned in order to it: but, after some consideration, she found out that a woman could not well be married, unless a man could be found for her husband, and this was a lucky discovery, which thing might have escaped one less in a hurry than she. Now Genevieve was so far from getting married, that she had not got so much as an offer from the man on whom she had fixed her heart, nor had she any reason soon to expect one, or, indeed, at all, unless she could court the philosopher in the shape of a Greek folio; she had a fine Grecian face, indeed, and that was something in her favour. That she was in love with Acerbus was a thing as well known to him as if he had read it in Aristotle, for she courted him as far as she dared to do, and, as hot things are apt to communicate their heat, she had so far—But hold, proportion is one of the graces of architecture, a few bricks one way or the other are no great matter, a man may put them in his eye and see none the worse for them, he might grumble, perhaps, if he had a barge-load shot into it, and say they hurt his sight—we will therefore stop the trowel here, reader, and put the rest of our matter into the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

In Continuation.

WE have left a broken sentence, but we will build to it, and fill all holes in due time. We shall now proceed to say how love suited Genevieve's high stomach—it lay very hard upon it, reader—and, what was worse, she could not get rid of it any way—no, it stuck like a sponge and swelled there: finding this, how very wise it was in her to give up being mistress where she could not be master, and fall to obey where she could not command! Love is vastly fond of bringing down a proud stomach. Genevieve had queened it over the men like a tyrant, but her reign was now over, and it was her turn to be a subject and to have her crown cast to the ground: where she cast herself one warm day, and Lady Charlotte came to look at her, as it hath been said: yes, she lay at her full length on the grass under a green tree, fit posture for one so humbled, and confessed her passion to her friend: who, it may be remembered, kindly instructed her in the way to catch the philosopher: and she had now practised what her friend advised her with much patience and some success. She had become entomologist and studied insects, made collections, and, her purse giving her great advantages over the poor philosopher, she had bought foreign beetles, spiders, butterflies, and a variety of curious creeping things, and a grand compound microscope that cost her forty guineas. She fed caterpillars, toads, and lizards

in boxes, and gave up her mind with all diligence to the propagation of diptera, hymenoptera, aptera, and coleoptera.

After some time the philosopher got scent of these things by a side wind, and he followed her up stairs one day to her dressing-room, which she had turned into a museum, the sight of which touched the philosopher's heart to the quick.

"What do you want, you great blockhead?" said she, turning round at her door and seeing him creeping up stairs after her, "what d'ye hunt me about for?" saying which she put the key into the lock of the door inside and locked the philosopher out. She then took out her grand microscope, which was made of shining brass and highly finished, and set it out on a table directly opposite to the key-hole of the door and pretended to begin some exhibitions. The philosopher stood outside the same and put his eye into the key-hole, but in vain. Genevieve saw that the brass tongue had fallen over it, and put it aside. The philosopher tried again, and got a sight of the amorous Genevieve's whole apparatus. He knew in a moment what it was, and fell into a rapture at the sight of it! He knocked at her door, begged and prayed to be let in—but in vain! So the poor philosopher was e'en forced to stand outside the door and see Genevieve and her microscope, through the key-hole. It grieved her heart to hear the poor man beg at her door, and she felt a sensation which she never had felt before at the prayers of any man: but she obeyed the artful Lady Charlotte's orders, and let him stand and peep and beg, and beg and peep for an hour. Poor Acerbus had long since been saving all the money he could scrape together to buy a microscope,

and had not yet got enough to buy one of inferior excellence, but when he saw through the key-hole that Genevieve had got one of the very best that could possibly be bought for money, the sight of it made his heart leap within him.

"Pray, Jenny, let me see your microscope," said he.

"Get along, you impertinent coxcomb," said she, "how do you know what I have got?"

She then took out a very fine case of outlandish insects, and held them so full before the key-hole as to give him a sight of a collection that had cost her twenty guineas. The philosopher was in agonies, and scarce knowing what he did, began to push the door. Do or say whatever he could, however, the cruel puss would not let him come in, but had the barbarity to run to her door and put the brass tongue down over the key-hole, and the philosopher could see no more. Upon which he took his book out of his pocket, sat him down at her door, and read till she came out at it, but she locked it after her.

Now he grew extremely earnest with her to be shown her curiosities, but she put him off. The philosopher was always getting to her key-hole, and, what instructions the artful Lady Charlotte had given her friend in the management of her key-hole we cannot say, Genevieve, however, shewed the philosopher a great many odd things through it; and how could she tell, with a thick oak door before her eyes, when he was at her key-hole?—It was impossible, for her garter coming loose one day, she tied it, by some accident, just opposite to the key-hole, and showed the philosopher, amongst other curiosities, one of the most beautiful ankles in the world!

His favourite pointer, Ponto, who was in Genevieve's dressing-room, jumped up at that moment, smelled his master, and ran to the door and whined. Genevieve caught the dog up in her arms, and, giving him half a dozen kisses, put him out at it, and said, "Get along, you nasty toad! I can't think what it is that brings you here!" Acerbus saw her kiss the dog through the key-hole, and was not a little surprised at the difference of poor Ponto's treatment inside and outside the door, for he came out with a piece of sweet cake in his mouth. The philosopher now made a push, whether Genevieve's pretty ankle ran in his head or what, and got his body, no small one, between the door and the door-post, so that Genevieve could not shut it again. Now such a great strong creature as she was, might easily have pushed him out and shut her door, but, seeing him eager after something, she did not do it, and, though she called him an hundred blockheads, she would not have hurt him for the world. She gave way and he came in, but there was nothing to be seen: he pressed her again, with more ardour than ever, to show him her collection of insects and her microscope, but alas, this was not what she wanted him to press her for! Yet it pleased her too to have the man whom she so fondly loved press her for anything. Now when one sees another fond of what oneself is fond of, one cannot help feeling a little fondness for that person whose likings suit our own. Genevieve's excessive beauty often attracted the eyes of the philosopher, but he always had contented himself with a look. But now a sigh escaped her, and there was a soft effusion in her eyes which might have been more easily construed than a sentence in Aristotle.

"My dear Jenny," said he, "pray grant me one thing."

She asked him what it was, and for some reason, dropt her chin upon her neck and blushed.

"Nay, Jenny," said he, "it is nothing to blush at."

She wished it had been!—He took her hand, but she did not box his ears as she had served others, but stood as still as a mouse and did nothing but blush.

"What do you want, you fool?" said she, gently twisting her hand as if she had no mind to take it away from him.

"Pray let me see your microscope, Jenny?" said Acerbus.

"What will you give me," said she, half yielding, "to show you it?"

"Dear Jenny," said he eagerly, "I will give you anything—I will give you a kiss to let me see it!"

Now this the philosopher had often done at meetings and at partings, and thought no more of it than what a little kindness came to, and Genevieve had as often returned it, as a relation might do, without dreaming of a blush: but the philosopher was now taught how one kiss differs from another, a difference which Porphyry hath not set down, and Aristotle himself no where mentions. Instead of standing ready, as usual, to receive his kiss, Genevieve blushed and turned her face away, which thing put the philosopher to his enthymemes.*

"What's the matter now, my pretty Jenny?" said he, holding her hand, which was twisted round in his as she turned her back upon him, "you and I

* Aristotle gave the name enthymeme to an inference from likelihoods and signs, which in his logical system is the same as a rhetorical syllogism.—*Editor's Note.*

have kissed before to day without making any blushing matter of it."

"Get along, you great fool," said she, without taking her hand away, "I am not in any humour to be kissed now."

"Well," said he, "let me see your microscope, and it is no matter."

Genevieve snatched her hand out of his in a moment, and bade him leave the room.

"My dear Jenny," said he, "I am sorry to have offended you," and following her to the end of the room, kissed her cheek, but with some difficulty, as she did nothing but turn her back to him—yes, he kissed her cheek and brought away a tear upon his lips: now if he had kissed her mouth it might have watered, and the moisture been very well accounted for, but it came off her cheek and ran down from one of her pretty black eyes to meet the philosopher's lip! The philosopher very well knew what ailed her, for he was perilous shrewd at the solving of problems, and a deep dog at the analysis of compounds into primitives. "I love you, my pretty Jenny," quoth he, "because you love what I love," and, although he had his arms round Genevieve's waist, she never once knocked him down, as she served Lord Delamere, or Colonel Barret, no, nor boxed his ears, as she did little Cocky's. "Now, my pretty Jenny," said he, and kissed the other cheek—the devil must be in Genevieve to bear all this!—"Now, my pretty Jenny," said he, "let me look at your microscope, and your foreign insects!"

Genevieve wished the insects and the microscope at the deuce, for she was wofully afraid that all this kissing came from the wrong end at last,—videlicet, curi-

osity. "Let me go," said she, standing as still as a mouse, "let me go, you great ass!" and, if it had not been too cold, one would have thought she had been turned all into marble, her tongue excepted, which was the only thing about her she was able to move: no, she was not quite as cold as a stone, though she stood like a statue, for she burnt the philosopher through her clothes.

Now the philosopher never had had a woman in his arms before, and, though he had tried a great many experiments in natural philosophy, had not a guess until that moment what an astonishing matter it was to have such fast hold of a fine woman. Lizards, butterflies, moths, bats, toads, all the tribes of aptera, diptera, and coleoptera, and the grand compound microscope at their tails, all left his brains together, and he did nothing but stare at Genevieve's beautiful face, and delightful person, as he held her in his arms. She tried to be very angry with him, but could not for her heart. She tried to put on a frown but could not find one that would stick for a moment upon her brow!—no! her eyes were as soft and as moist as the dewy stars of eve, and her heart fluttered like a leaf agitated by the breath of the zephyrs! Indeed, reader, that is a very pretty sentence, we hope that you are ten times as much charmed with it as we are. But it is high time that the philosopher should release Genevieve; we think you must blush, fair reader, at the shocking situation in which she stands—no, no, don't blush now, sweet one, blush when your lover holds you just in the same manner as Acerbus held Genevieve, and that will make him hold you the faster.

But the imperious Genevieve begins to struggle for

her liberty, and anger at last comes to her aid, she flung out of Acerbus's arms in a moment, threw herself upon a sofa, and wept. The philosopher ought to have sat down by her and cried too, but he had too little of Heracitus in him for that. It came into Genevieve's head that instead of buying a trap to catch Acerbus, she had laid out her money in buying nothing in the world but rivals, and that the philosopher was in love with her insects and her microscope instead of her, and so she grew angry first and then broke into tears.

The philosopher looked at her awhile as she sat leaning her face upon her hand with her wet eyes cast down upon the floor. "My lovely kinswoman," said he, "why weepest thou? If I am the cause thereof the cause shall be removed, and the effect will cease: but answer me—"

"I'll answer no such fool," said she.

"Well," said he, "but may not a fool sometimes ask a wise question?"

"When you ask a wise question," said she, "you may expect an answer."

"What is a wise question, Jenny?" said he.

"Not that, you great ass," said Genevieve.

"You used to love me, Jenny," said Acerbus, "do you love me now?"

"Another fool's question," said she.

"Am I not to believe it then, had not you rather wish I did?"

"I have no wishes about such nonsense," said she.

"You thought the question worth an answer, however," said he.

"I might not, and yet answer it," said she.

"May not you love me, Jenny, and be angry with

yourself for loving one that so little deserves to be loved?"

"What do you mean by love, you blockhead?" said Genevieve.

"An eager wish to possess some good thing," said he.

"You have a fine opinion of yourself, Mr. Philosopher."

"Nay," said he, "but may not you love me and mistake me to be what I am not, and cease to love when you know what I am? Is not Cupid painted blind?—Why, Jenny, what is it that makes you blush so much? I cannot talk to you now without putting you into a flutter: how comes this?—it had not used to be."

"Get out of my room, sir, you have no business here," said she.

"Would you have me do what you would rather have me not do?" said the philosopher, "or not do what you would have me do by doing what you bid me do?"

"Get along, you great hobgoblin, and take your abominable paw off my shoulder—I will throw the table at your head!—get out of my room, I say, I have some experiments to make with my microscope—you grinning jack-a-napes."

"Ah, Jenny, Jenny, sweet, lovely, pretty Jenny—"

"You fawning fool," said she, "you shall not see my microscope."

"Come, show me your microscope, Jenny, I will promise to touch nothing.—But it is no matter for your microscope if you will let me sit here and look at your pretty face."

Genevieve's cheek became scarlet at this; to hide her face she leaped off the sofa, and taking her microscope

out of its case put it upon the table before the philosopher, who soon saw that she had bought a thing that she did not at all understand how to use. Acerbus was perfect master of the whole apparatus, and Genevieve was astonished to find so much entertainment in a thing that she knew no more how to manage than a cow. After having made some curious exhibitions, for the instrument was very excellent, "Jenny," said he, "you bought this thing on purpose to please me, and, but for pleasing yourself by pleasing me, it could not be to please yourself, forasmuch as you cannot be pleased with what you do not understand."

"Come, teach me then," said she; and they soon fell to prattling together. But as the philosopher said very little but what another man might say in his place, we shall not put his words down here, and add no more than that he came out of Genevieve's museum when the butler knocked at the door to call her to dinner, for neither of them heard the first or second bell, though the bell rang loud enough to be heard ten miles. It was a wonder, reader, was it not? that the philosopher came out of Genevieve's museum without broken bones. But after all she could scarce tell what to make of what he said about love, if to take it as a proposal, or the kindness of a cousin; and here she stood, poor woman, in cruel doubt, though he called her face a pretty one. She had so far warmed the philosopher, however, as to put him in the head of a wife, and he had some talk with his father and mother, and Old Crab, upon the subject, for there was not one eye in the whole family but saw how Genevieve doated upon Acerbus, for as to concealing her love for him she might just as well look to conceal a house on fire.

Old Comical, who had a feeling heart, said one day to him, "Ah Buzzy, you will let poor Beauty," for so he always called Genevieve, "you will let poor Beauty die for love of you; put Plato upon the shelf and take down old Ovid, he'll tell you what to do with a poor love-sick maiden—she'll make a delicious sweetheart, Buzzy."

"John," quoth the philosopher, "the maiden shall not die."

A few days after, Genevieve, seeing Acerbus come into the garden reading the divine Plato as he walked, threw her glove in his way, and watched him behind a rose-tree: when the philosopher came to it he picked it up and put it into his pocket. Walking on he presently met Lady Charlotte Orby, who had been gathering some strawberries for her mother.—She saw the glove hanging out of his pocket, and fell a-laughing. It were odds but he had passed her without knowing it, but her ladyship's laugh awakened him from his Platonic dream, for he was deep in the *Timæus*, when he lifted up his eyes, and beheld Lady Charlotte, who pointed at the glove and laughed as aforesaid. Genevieve, who had been watching them in the rose-bush, now came up.

"So," said Lady Charlotte, "our philosopher must certainly be in love, look, he walks about with ladies' gloves in his pockets!—I suppose his pockets are full, see, one hangs out for want of room—I can't think whose glove that is now."

Genevieve blushed. Upon which her ladyship had the boldness to twitch the glove away, and turning down the arm of it exhibited Genevieve's name written on the inside of it. "I have long since had my suspicions," said she, "but when a lady gives a man her

glove to play with, it is a sure sign he may have her hand too if he pleases: but you will be better company without me," added she, running away, laughing as she went; a spiteful toad!—Genevieve and the philosopher were now left to themselves, and one looked blue, and one as red as fire.

"I am come to look for my glove," said Genevieve, in a flutter.

"There it lies," quoth the philosopher, pointing at it as it lay, for Lady Charlotte had thrown it between them on the walk.

"How came you by it?" said she.

"I saw it lie on the walk and picked it up," said he.

"Did you know it to be my glove?" said she.

"How could I choose," said he, "when your glove is bigger than anybody's glove that I know?"

"You might have let it alone, I think, and not made us look like two fools," said she.

"Did I look like a fool?" said he.

"I felt as if I did" said she.

"Is that any proof that I looked like a fool?" said he; "cannot you look like a fool, Jenny, if you please, without my looking like a fool too for company? What was there in this thing to make you change countenance, and why did you put yourself into the rose-bush?"

"What d'ye mean by that, sir?" said Genevieve in confusion.

"Mean!" quoth he, "why, I saw you throw your glove on the walk after you looked which way I was coming, and then hide yourself in the bush—now, pry-thee, my pretty cousin, what could you mean by this?"

Genevieve was in a pucker, and bit her lips till the

blood dropt upon her bosom.—“Well, well,” continued he, “I will answer the question for you, my pretty kinswoman: you are willing to be my mate, and make signs of what you cannot speak: come, pretty Jenny, for indeed I think you pretty, you shall be my mate and I will be your mate, my pretty kinswoman, and we will be man and wife together. I have found out your love, and will give you love for love: I have broken the matter to my father and my mother, and my good uncle Bartholomew, and my good aunt, and all think well of a wedding between us; and so my sweet pretty Jenny, I will kiss your sweet lips, if you please, upon the bargain.”

Upon which he made a mark with his thumb-nail in Plato, lest he lose his place where he left off reading, and shutting up the folio, put it upon a little bench, then folding his arms round Genevieve’s waist gave her a hearty kiss upon her lips; after which, taking up Plato, and opening the book, he walked off reading Greek, and left Genevieve to her meditations. Now if she had known what an impudent thing the philosopher was going to do, she certainly would have boxed the philosopher’s ears like a fury, while he was marking his book with his thumb nail, and putting it down on the seat; but how could she know it? She could not help standing still to be kissed when she did not know what it was that were coming. It were very well if every lady had so good an excuse for getting kissed as she had, for many get kissed without any excuse at all, and that is very indecent, sad toads!

Now it is no very easy thing to describe the odd way Genevieve was in when Acerbus left her, as afore-said, to her meditations. In the first place her lips had

never been kissed by any man before, so that was quite new to her, and the first thing she did was to fall into a great passion at the philosopher's impudence, and threaten him vehemently against the next time he should take such liberties with her august person. As soon as that passion was over, she fell into another with herself, for not falling into a passion with the philosopher sooner, which might have prevented the said liberties; as soon as that was over, she fell into another and that was with herself too, for not being more angry than pleased to be kissed neck and heels in such a manner; and then she fell to spitting and wiping her mouth with her handkerchief, as if she had touched poison! She had not done yet, but still out of the frying-pan into the fire, she fell into another passion, because the philosopher had found out what she would rather have him know, and had taken all the pains in the world to tell him, and that was that she was violently in love with him. Then she fell into a passion of laughing, and then into another of crying, and after some other falls of the like kind, she fell back into the passion of love, and, what with the heat of the day, for it was a very hot one, and all these hot passions put together, and the last, the hottest of all, Genevieve would have taken fire and been burnt to the ground, if she had not run down directly to the bathing-house and thrown herself into the lake.

We must now put an end to this chapter—but hold, we promised in our bill of fare at the head of it to say something about Old Comical:—Now there was a lady in these days, named Madam Frances Funstall, who had a duke for her father and a dairy-maid for her mother, and lived at a neat little house in a village called

Dillies Piddle. Her noble father, seeing she was not like to be a beauty, left her in his will a legacy of ten thousand pounds, part of which she had laid out in a purchase of a house and garden, and lived upon the interest of the remainder like a gentlewoman of figure. This was very considerate in his grace, for a woman without beauty and without money may get up before sunrise and look for a husband till 'tis dark, and then go to bed without one. As for beauty, Madam Funstall had not as much as she could cover with her hand, which was so small, and her fingers so short and thick that she could not shut it; she had the duke's nose only, all the rest belonged to the dairy wench, it was red and broad, and looked like a bit of sponge; furthermore it had maggots in it, for the flies always blowed it in the summer: her face was a black olive, as round as a cricket ball, her eyes black as pitch, her eyebrows very black and very broad, and covered three parts of her forehead; her hair as coarse as a horse's tail, which showed the strength of her constitution; her body was short and in shape like a brick; her legs were also short, and her feet broad both like a duck's, and she was like a duck in another thing, she waddled as she walked; her bosom was extremely prominent and large, and when she suckled her first child she had milk enough to spare to make two pounds of butter a-week, which Old Comical carried to market, whom she married, as may be said. She was forty years of age when he came a-courting to Dillies Piddle, spirited thereto by his brother's death, and, not only coming in, as heir at law, to all his property, but lord of the manor also of Cock-a-doodle.

CHAPTER III

Old Comical's first Visit at Dillies-Piddle—Further accounts of Lady Charlotte and her Lovers—Further accounts also of Genevieve and the Philosopher.—*Old Comical moves the quill.*

OLD Comical was smoking his pipe in the porch at the farm, as it was his custom after his day's work was done, and drinking his ale, when Julia came running to him, and said, "John, papa wants you in the little parlour, he has got some very good news for you, he has, indeed; you look as if you thought I told a story."

"Why, Rosebud," quoth Old Comical, "you are grown to be so full of fun now you have got your old sweetheart again, that a plain man scarce knows where to have you."

"If I were not happy and merry too, John," said she, "having so great cause to be both, I should not deserve to be either one or the other."

"You begin to see how things go in this world, my sweet rose-bud," quoth he, "sun and cloud, sun and cloud make up our days here; and, as for our nights, if a man can't sleep for the toothache, or a maiden for thinking of her sweetheart, why, they must c'en lie awake, or get up and hang themselves! Ah, madam, you will be a great lady soon, and I must call you madam."

"If I get proud at being a great lady," said Julia, "I shall soon grow to be a very little one—no John, no—

no pride for me—and if I see you with a new face, I shall be very sorry ever to have liked your old one: you were so kind to me when I was in trouble, that I shall always love you for it; but you must be what you used to be for me to love you as I always used to do: you won my heart when I was a little girl, John; when you used to bring me pretty fairings from the fairs, ribands, and pretty beads, and gingerbread-nuts, and do or say what I could, always paid for them all out of your poor wages. I shall not love you, John, if you will not come to my fine house, and call me your rose-bud as you used to do—no indeed, instead of being pleased, my heart will ache every time I see you, if you use me like a fine lady.”

“Sume my body,” quoth Old Comical, “if I am much given to throw my waters out at window, but you have such an odd sort of a way with you, Rosy, that you make water come out at a man’s eyes in spite of his heart; but let us have this good news, Rosy, let us hear the good news!”

“I don’t know what it is, John,” said Julia, “but my papa said that it would turn your brains! he did indeed.”

“Well,” quoth Old Comical, “if a man’s brains lie the wrong side uppermost, the sooner they are turned the better, Rosy; where’s master? in the little parlour?”

“Yes, John, he is just going to take his afternoon’s nap—he has worked hard to-day—go directly—I am glad he has got some good news for you, because it will be good news for me too.”

“Ah sweet, sweet Rosy,” quoth Old Comical, “the next time I meet George I’ll bid him give you half a dozen kisses for me—aye, and stand by and see it done too, and if he does not do it well I’ll make him do it

all over again: 'sume my body if it does not do my heart good, Rosy, to see you look so fat again—when you were so ill and looked so pale, 'sume my body if my heart did not feel just as if a man had it in a lemon-squeezer!"

"Come, come, John, do go—my papa will be out of patience."

Upon which Julia ran out into the cow-pastures to meet George Grove, and Old Comical knocked at Old Crab's little parlour door: "Come in!" quoth Old Crab, "who is to wait all night for you, ye chattering scoundrel! what d'ye stand gossiping with my wench for, when I send for you? Come in and shut the door, you rascal—d'ye know that you are grown to be a better man than your master? you will go mad, or to the devil, for your good luck will be worse than the gallows!"

"To run mad for good luck, your honour, will make a merry race of it: what's the matter?"

"Matter, you dog, why, your brother died last week while I was in Northamptonshire upon my aunt's business. I called at his house and found him at his last—he has made you his executor—there's the will—you come in for landed property to the amount of three thousand a-year. He asked me if I were coming home and, putting his will into my hand, ordered me to give it to you; when he took leave of me, and the rest who were in the room, fell into one of his fits and died."

Old Comical turned pale at this intelligence, which was no little change for one who had such a red face, took his brother's will out of Old Crab's hand, and ran out of the little parlour without speaking one word. Whereupon Old Crab took off his wig and hung her upon a candle branch; wrapt his head up in one of his

wife's flannel petticoats, and forthwith took his afternoon's nap.

When a pardon is brought to a rogue at the foot of the gallows, a surgeon is usually sent along with it to let him blood upon it, lest the good news coming upon him all on a sudden, should prove as fatal to him one way as the halter would another. Old Comical, it is true, was not going to be hanged, however he might deserve a bit of string for some of his old tricks—see what comes of letting a man alone in the world—who knows what turn a man may take? what if poor Old Comical had been nipped in his bud at the gallows! aye, just before his honesty began to bloom like a rose under the very nostril of the devil? there would have been a fine example lost of repentance, watery repentance, and reformation!—Old Satan would have snapt at him like a cat at a bit of bacon—yes—like a cat at a bit of bacon, if he had been hanged before his guardian angel pulled his ear and gave him a touch with his elbow, as much as to say, mind your P's and Q's, old man. No, no, Old Comical was not going to be hanged as we were a saying, and so far good news might be the less dangerous; it brought him trouble in his inward parts however, and what might have turned another man's brains turned Old Comical's stomach into confusion, uproar and astonishment. Adszooms, what a rumbling and grumbling, what a piping, what a squalling of the bowels! what a quarrelling and noise, what a piece of work there was in his inside! He felt as if he had swallowed a great rebellion and they were fighting for a new constitution in his belly! but he had no mind to run mad for all that; for then he would have been put into a dark room and had his money taken away.

“Now,” said he, shutting Old Crab’s garden door, “I will see if I can get in time to be chief mourner at my brother’s funeral, but as for crying, everybody knows how little water I have to spare that way; folks will be disappointed if they take my eyes for a pair of water-squirts: what! come into three thousand a-year, and put my finger in my eye! A very small bottle will hold all my flittings. No,—as for weeping, we will leave all that to be done by all such as come in for nothing by the death of the departed, they may weep with a better grace, and never be suspected of hypocrisy; no, no,—no weeping, tears have nothing to do in the matter, for my brother is better off, and so am I; then what occasion is there for crying, when there is no harm done on either side? A good friend is gone, it is true, but when he has done us all the good he can do, and left a world of troubles for a better, he would call me a fool if he saw me fall a-crying, and tell me so to my face, if he could speak his mind.”

Upon which Old Comical shut Old Crab’s garden door, as aforesaid, put on his best suit, and set off for the manor of Cock-a-doodle. Now having settled all matters to his mind, paid his legacies, settled the widow in her jointure house, and put a good tenant into Cock-a-doodle hall, he gat him forthwith into a post-chaise, and galloped into Old Crab’s farm-yard with four horses and two postillions, a tankard of strong beer in his hand, and a long pipe of tobacco in his mouth, with the end thereof sticking out of the post-chaise window. Old Crab, hearing a great noise among the pigs, and a cracking of whips, as he sat in his little parlour, came forth at the moment Old Comical drove

up to the backside of the house, for he had too much modesty to come up to the grand entrance.

“Why, you scoundrel!” quoth Old Crab, “I expected you to run mad, but this is not the way to Bedlam, what the plague d’ye come here for?”

Old Comical, pulling his head and shoulders out of the tankard, for it was a monstrous jug, big enough for a man to bathe in it, said, “Look you, master, I am as much your humble servant to command as ever, for all I am lord of the manor of Cock-a-doodle,” blowing a long pillar of smoke out of his mouth through the chaise window: “you have been a noble master to me, took me in when I had nothing but rags upon my back and raw turnips in my belly, fed me and clothed me, and ’sume my body if I ever leave your farm as long as you will let me work for you! no, no,—you were my friend when I had not a sixpence in my pocket, and ’sume me if I ever forsake you now I have three thousand pounds a-year, and am lord of the manor of Cock-a-doodle!”

Upon which Old Comical gave his tankard to the post-boys, and a crown a-piece to comfort their constitutions on the road, as he told them, threw off his coat and waistcoat and went afield with the next empty waggon, for Old Crab was in the middle of his wheat harvest. And this brings us down, as it were by a regular flight of steps, to Old Comical’s first-visit, as a lover, at Dillies Piddle. It was Sunday morning, and Madam Funstall sat tackled out in her best apparel, at her breakfast table, when Old Comical rang at her gate with a calf’s heart in his hand, a great skewer stuck in it, and the blood all trickling through his fingers. Madam Funstall cast her radiant eyes through her window, as she sat sipping her tea and brandy, saw,

and knew him in a moment; for Old Comical, long since her ardent lover, used to stick her pigs and singe her bacon, and never told his love: and how should he dare when he was a day labourer on Old Crab's farm, at a shilling a day and his victuals? He had been fain to hide till now the slow-consuming fire, till fortune smiled; of these, her smiles, however, Madam Funstall of Dillies Piddle, as yet, knew nothing. Now Madam Funstall had a maid whose name was Keziah.

"Cazy!" said she, "go to John Mathers, he is at the gate, and tell him we never kill pigs o' Sundays:—we shall have a porker fit to stick on Wednesday next, bid him be with us at six o'clock in the morning; stay, now I think of it, he was not paid for the last, here, take him his shilling and give him a horn of ale, I dare say he is come for his money."

During this talk, Old Comical, feeling a little indignant that a man of his appurtenances should be made to stand at the gate, gave the bell t'other touch, when out came Cazy.

"You had best pull the bell down, hadn't you, you hang-gallows rascal!" quoth she: "what the plague d'ye come to dun people for your hog-money* o' Sunday mornings?—I have a good mind you should be beat off without your ale, though my mistress bade me draw a horn of the sixpenny, tearing at the bell, as if you were a lord or a duke, you frightful old plague!"—say-

* A local corruption of hogmenay or hogmanay, a word of uncertain etymology, meaning a gift bestowed on those who apply for it, according to ancient custom, during the Christmas season. Hogmanay, as a date in the popular calendar, is specifically December 31, but by extension the name is applied to the entire month.—*Editor's Note.*

ing which she flung a shilling's-worth of half-pence directly into Old Comical's face, some of which flew into his mouth, which was open to make answer, and some into the bosom of his shirt, whence they slid down into his breeches.

"'Sume my body," quoth Old Comical, "I am come for no horns of ale, or any other horns, here!" spitting the half-pence out of his mouth—which he disdained to pick out of the dirt, where the saucy baggage had flung them in her passion; "you, and your ale, and your hog-money may go to the devil for me, I came for neither the one nor the other, nor for ill words neither, and I'll teach you how you ought to talk to your betters presently, or kick you out of the bishop's jurisdiction!"

"My betters! who are you?" quoth Cazy—"my father's a leather breeches maker, and my mother sells black-puddings, tripe, and sausages, and pray, what ditch did you come out of, you hedgehog! The parish has put a new suit of clothes upon your back and turned your head upon your shoulders, I think."

"Ah, you saucy slut," quoth Old Comical, "this comes of your mistress's trusting you with the key of the ale cellar; a man may stand at the gate, and ring his heart out, while you are swilling at the cock, with the spigot in your hand, and your mouth at the fosset! I remember when you first came into this house as lean as a ferret, and as hungry as a weasel, when your father and mother kept you upon old leather breeches and the skins of black puddings, and sent you to the horse-pond to wash down your dinner! Then you were thin and civil, and now, after a year's keeping under Madam Funstall's dripping-pan, you are got as fat as a ball of grease, and as saucy as the devil!"

"I dine upon old leather breeches! I eat the skins of black-puddings!" quoth Cazy: "what d'ye mean by that, you lying old ballad-singing rogue? what have you picked up at the parson's? Ha? what did you bring to his doors besides a bag of bones, and ballads, and a three-legged stool? Ha? what had you upon your back but a bundle of rags, and what in your belly but turnip-tops, rotten apples, cabbage-stalks and wind?"

"You prating young minx," quoth Old Comical, pulling his quid of tobacco out of his mouth and putting it upon the gate post, "have you forgot that I can speak the English tongue as well as you? If you have, I will put you in mind of it presently, in a gentle whisper, sweet as the breath of eve, that holds soft dalliance with the summer rose, you termagant young draggle-tailed gipsy! Rags upon my back! yes, I had, and 'tis more than you had when you came to Madam Funstall's kitchen fire! Had you a rag on your back when you came in, as naked as a worm, and as hungry as a kite in a hard frost, to lick Madam Funstall's greasy plates and dishes? Ha, breeches-maker's daughter? answer me that! Who clothed your carcass, washed your face, filled your belly, and killed your vermin, ha! answer me that, my lady! How many hundred thousand did Madam Funstall hire at once when she took you, and your lice, into her hogsty to serve the pigs, scour her yard, wash her forecourt and backside,* answer me that, cows-tripe and chitter-

*SCHOLIUM.

Backside.]—Applied, with decency, to the posteriors of an human creature: figuratively, a yard or court behind a house. —RIDER'S DICTIONARY. The word is used by the author in the last sense.

lings! I remember when you ran about her house as rough as a rag-mop and as lean as a broomstick, when the cook could scarce keep your head out of the porridge pot with the kitchen poker, when you dashed at the mutton fat and beef dripping, as hungry as a hound after a day's stag-hunting, when you would seize the meat on the spit before it was half roasted, as ravenous as a starved savage, and not content with that, sopped the cook in the pan and eat her clothes and all!"

"I eat the cook! 'tis a blazing lie!" quoth Cazy, "I never ate a cook in my life, I'll take my oath on't!"

"Ah, ye false young baggage, you eat Mrs. Veal, and Madam Funstall, hearing her roar, ran out to see what was the matter, and found nothing left but a piece of her checked apron hanging out of your mouth; when will you leave this sad trick of telling lies, you young jade?"

"If I did, I am a murderer, and deserve to be hanged," quoth Cazy, bursting into tears; upon which Madam Funstall, who stood listening and laughing at her window, tossed up the sash and asked Old Comical what he wanted?

"Madam," quoth Old Comical, pulling off his hat to shew his respect at once and his new wig, and bending his body to the earth, "I am come to speak a few words to your delicacy, should you but vouchsafe to lend an ear, Madam, sweet Madam Funstall, to the voice of your admirer, slave, and servant."

Madam Funstall, well enough acquainted with Old Comical's oddities, bade him go and sit down in the kitchen, and said she would make an end of her breakfast, and come to him there, and repeated her orders to Cazy to draw him a horn of ale.

“I had as lief draw him a horn of poison,” muttered Cazy, as she marched toward the tap; “I eat Mrs. Veal, indeed! a lying old rogue!”—So the lord of the manor of Cock-a-doodle was e’en forced to take his old place in the kitchen and drink his ale, notwithstanding he was an esquire and worth upwards of three thousand pounds a-year.

Old Comical, it is true, was often invited by Mr. Decastro to dine at the castle, and that too at his own table, not only for the sake of his oddities, but upon the consideration of his family, which was certainly one of the first class and connected with many of the first rank; but, however this might be, others made him know his distance notwithstanding he was a gentleman’s son, and had been bred at an university; for the honour and respect of the world is drawn by gold as iron by a magnet, and this accounts for Madam Funstall, who was as proud as a peacock, putting Old Comical into the kitchen. There he sat in the settle, drinking his ale, and spitting brimstone at Cazy, when Madam Funstall came into it with her nose between her fingers, a custom with her when she came into such filthy places to speak to filthy people. Upon her entrance Old Comical rose up out of the settle, and presenting Madam Funstall with the bloody heart afore-said, pierced through with a large skewer, spake as followeth:

“Madam,” quoth he, “I am come to offer you my heart, pierced as you see, with a dart, and dripping with blood to raise your tender pity!—this bleeding heart, which is a calf’s heart, is an emblem of my own, pierced too, and bleeding too like this!—behold this iron skewer, it is an emblem of Cupid’s arrow, with which my heart

is smitten and its tender substance divided!" Old Comical then flung his wig upon the bricks, and kneeling down upon it with one knee, poured out his soul at Madam Funstall's foot.

"Cazy," quoth she, "what beer have you drawn for John Mathers?"

"A horn of the sixpenny, Madam," quoth Cazy.

"Which horn? the great horn?"

"No, madam, the little pint."

"John," quoth Madam Funstall, talking in her nose which she still held fast between her finger and thumb, "are you not ashamed to get drunk on Sunday morning?"

"Radiant star!" quoth Old Comical, "put your longest spit into my body if I am drunk, or half drunk!" and gave her a look that made her doubt if he were in his right mind; "Madam," continued he, "in whom all virtues and all good things are mixed up, like suet, flour, brandy, plums, and sugar in a pudding; I am come this morning to unbutton my waistcoat before you upon a certain matter, and lay my bosom open, spicy sweetness, to your view: there you sit, have sat, and ever will sit like a lady in a lobster, heavenly queen, enthroned, commanding all that is within this body and without it too, my liver and my spleen, my midriff, sweetbreads, pancreas, guts and heart! O Madam Frances Funstall! apple of this world's eye! O fruit of Heaven! the very gold on this world's gingerbread! butter of Paradise! angel in woman's flesh and petticoats, hear my prayer!"

"Why, John," quoth she, holding her nose over him as he knelt on his wig at her feet, "are you mad?"

"Not mad," quoth he.

“What then?” quoth she.

“In love,” quoth he.

“With me?” quoth she.

“With thee,” quoth he; and forthwith laid his bald pate upon her foot, and groaned.

“Hey-day!” quoth Madam Funstall, “you have stuck my pigs to a fine purpose, but you shall stick nothing more in my house, I’ll warrant you!—you dare to make love to me that work for parson Decastro for twelve-pence a-day and your victuals!—Cazy, go this moment and fetch the constable and half a dozen stout fellows directly, we’ll have him ducked in the first horse pond, and set up in the stocks to dry!”

“What!” quoth Old Comical, leaping up, “will you duck the lord of the manor of Cock-a-doodle in a horse-pond? Read that, madam,” added he, putting his brother’s will into her hand, “and then say if a man of my person, kidney, and appurtenances, does not deserve to be washed in better waters than the stale of a horse!”

Madam Funstall took the will, and presently her thumb and finger from her nose, for Old Comical soon became as sweet as a roll of pomatum, accepted his present of the calf’s heart, which she ordered the cook, in Old Comical’s hearing, to boil in cream and spices for her dinner.

CHAPTER III

Continued.

OLD Comical returned to the farm as gay as a lark, and soaring quite as high upon the reception of his heart, and his successes at Dillies Piddle. Passing by Hindermark on his way home, he met Lady Charlotte Orby, screaming and crying out for help, as if some sad thing were the matter.

“O, Mr. Mathers,” said she, wringing her hands in agony, “run into that shrubbery, they will kill Mr. Lamsbroke! Oh, run, run!”—saying which she fell down in a fit upon the grass.

Old Comical, who had got his crabstick in his hand to go a-courting to Madam Funstall, ran immediately, without seeing what happened to her ladyship, into the little wood, as he was directed, and found Lord George E. and the baronet, each with a stick in his hand, beating poor Harry Lamsbroke without mercy, who lay on the ground at their feet. Old Comical, as soon as he saw what was the matter, spit in his right hand, and, grasping his cudgel in it, gave the baronet a touch therewithal across his shoulders, which laid him at his full length on the ground, and, straddling over Harry’s body, was in the act of offering his lordship too a taste of his stick liquorice,* but he wisely ran from the crab-

* This euphemism for a licking survives locally in the folk-speech not only of England but of America. I have myself heard it used in Buffalo, N. Y.—*Editor’s Note.*

stick, while it yet hung in the air. It is surprising to see how a man will run away from a good thing sometimes.

Honest Mathers, having cleared the ground of his enemies, sat down, like a conqueror, upon the stump of a laurel, and, taking poor Harry upon his knee, began to rub his back, which had received the fury of the storm; when Lady Charlotte, who was recovered from her fit, came into the shrubbery, not a little glad to see her lover in such safe hands.

The proverb saith, "After sweet meat comes sour sauce:" this will now be seen in the account of this matter.

Lady Charlotte had so managed affairs with Lord George and the amorous baronet, that they not only did not suspect her of any partiality for Harry, but were led to think that she really disliked him, for she made him her jest and her scorn in public, and carried matters so far as to induce them even to take his part, which they both often did, when they thought her railery bore too hard upon him. She told them that he had taken the confidence to make her an offer, and treated Harry with such derision upon it, that Lord George one day said he thought she used him very ill, and that her conduct towards a man who had confessed a regard for her was really barbarous; and, although he was of a temper to bear a rival as ill as any man, yet he must needs say, that a civil refusal were enough, and added, that he did not like to see a man that had even paid his addresses to the woman whom he loved himself, treated with cruelty. In this the baronet joined him, jealous, perhaps, that his lordship should carry all the honours of a man of fine feelings and generosity.

“I think, my lord,” said Lady Charlotte, “you speak as much like a philosopher as it is possible for a man to do, who is none at all, and certainly like one who has great command over his passions as long as they do not dispute the point with him: as for this girl in boy’s clothes, (meaning Harry,) to tell you the truth, he is a very great favourite of mine, and I only laugh at him in public to cover my designs upon him and deceive others: you may think me in jest, and think Mr. Lamsbroke ill used, and since you call for quarter for him, I will make my advantage of it, and Mr. Lamsbroke shall walk with me to the castle to-morrow morning, and attend me to church, and we will go by ourselves, too, and then we shall have a better opportunity of saying tender things to each other:” upon which her ladyship put her hand kindly on Harry’s arm, and, giving him a very fond look, which was not understood by any person present except himself, for every body thought she was laughing at the poor fellow, said, “Will you walk with me to the castle to breakfast to-morrow, and go with me to my uncle’s church? Nay, Mr. Lamsbroke, you look as if you thought me in jest, I am in earnest now, I am indeed; his lordship and the worthy baronet think I have used you ill, and I am willing to make you some amends; I have a giddy way with me, but I am really sorry if I have said or done any thing to offend you.”

Harry bowed, and looked serious, like one who had been made a jest of too often not to suspect one here.

“Well, sir,” said Lady Charlotte, “I am sure the pleasure you have in going to church will, if nothing else can, induce you to walk with me: I have not the

vanity to reckon any thing upon the attractions of my company without so strong a motive, I might be more happy than you imagine, if I could do it without any."

Harry bowed again, and said he would go with her; upon which the ladies retired into the drawing-room, this talk having taken place after dinner, at Hindermark. As soon as the ladies were gone, every body took Harry's part, and condemned Lady Charlotte's conduct towards him unanimously.

"Upon my soul, Lamsbroke," said Lord George, "you must be a fellow of no spirit, to bear such usage from an angel, and, if there ever was an angel on earth, she is one: you are my rival here, it is true, and, though Sir Harry and I have entered into an agreement to keep the peace with each other, I would challenge any man besides him, whom I suspected to have the smallest prospect of success with her; yet, upon my honour, I must say, that I think her treatment of you is unpardonable."

"The least that a woman could do," said Sir Harry St. Clair, "is to use a man with civility, at all events, who has offered her the civilest thing he can offer on his part: I am astonished, Lamsbroke, that you will come to be insulted in this manner; she has rejected you, it is true, and laughed at you into the bargain, but she is willing to keep you in her train, by the lure she flung out before she left the room."

"She is full of these accursed snares," said Lord George; "what a pity it is, that so much wit and beauty, should be put into the hands of such a lovely inhuman creature!"

"I do not think she means any ill thing by what she says," said Harry Lamsbroke; "but one might, I con-

fess, construe something in one's favour out of what she said last."

"Speak not of favour," replied Lord George, "for, upon my soul, sir, from the moment Lady Charlotte Orby only shows you the least, she makes you and me the greatest enemies on earth, or on fifty earths: thus much is due to my passion for her; still, sir, I will say, that she uses you extremely ill, to hold out hope to make you more a jest, as she did when she left the room."

"I don't think," said Mr. Grove, in a whisper, "that her ladyship has now any wish to change her situation, if she had, she would not do any thing that would make a man afraid to marry her; for what must a man expect, who marries a woman of wit, whose malice is at least equal to her abilities to gratify it?"

"A great deal would depend upon the temper and management of her husband," said his lordship.

"As to management," whispered Mr. Grove, "I don't think her ladyship would allow her husband to take much the trouble of that. I, for my part, would not marry such a tongue, unless I had a mind to show with what patience I could bear to be flayed alive; I think I had rather marry Miss De Roma of the two, for, if we disagreed, she would knock my brains out at once, and put an end to my miseries upon the spot."

"It is well laid out in Miss De Roma to set her cap at the philosopher," said Sir Harry; "she may knock him down without his knowing any thing at all about the matter," looking at Acerbus, who sat next him in a brown study.

Harry touched his friend on the shoulder, and asked him if he heard what the baronet had said? The philos-

opher started, and replied, "The baronet must either have spoken well or ill, or neither: if well, it was so much the better for him, if ill, it was so much the better for me, who did not hear him, and there was no harm done, if he spoke neither the one nor the other," saying which, the philosopher shut up his eyes again, and returned to his brown study.

Tea and coffee were now carried into the drawing-room, upon which Mrs. Grove, who never spoke a word if she could help it, erected a finger to the butler, her usual sign to him to call in the gentlemen, who immediately left their wine with great gallantry, and came when they were bid; and it would be well for them if they always did so, for the world would not be so bad as it is, if the ladies had the management of it; but this is a great secret.

While they were at tea Genevieve, who had lost the philosopher, galloped to the gate on horseback, and was very glad to find him safe at Mr. Grove's, sitting in a corner, with his eyes shut, as usual. But not to digress, Lady Charlotte, upon Harry's coming into the room, called him to her, and bade him sit next her; "She had a mind," she said, "to recover her character, and would not be called cruel when, in her heart, she loved Mr. Lamsbroke." Upon which she said and did a great many kind things, which certainly would have enraged the jealousy of Lord George and the baronet, if all had not been taken for a jest: so that she and Harry made love to each other in good earnest in the face of all, without being, in the least, suspected by any; and her ladyship carried matters so far as to give Harry her hand to kiss, and told him she would teach him how to make love.

Upon which Lord George said, warmly, "her favours must be held very cheap indeed by him, if he shewed no emotion at that being given to another which he might beg and pray for in vain," and, thrusting himself between her and Harry, brought his chair in after him, which wedged Harry off to some distance.

"Never mind that, Mr. Lamsbroke," said she, "to be forced apart will but increase our love."

"You may crack your jokes as long as you please," said his lordship, "but no man shall take what I am refused as long as I set any value on your favours," and, offering to kiss her hand, he got a box on the ear, which did a thing which no box on the ear ever did before, perhaps; behold, it turned his lordship's hair into a wig all on a sudden, and it fell at his foot on the carpet, for none had a guess that his lordship put off another's hair for his own. His lordship was very angry and greatly confounded at this discovery, for his head was as bald as a wig-block; he picked up his wig and went to the other side of the room in a loud laugh, in which every body joined, except Acerbus, the philosopher, who sat in a deep reverie, with the lovely Genevieve at his side, who could not live out of his sight, and had come to Hindermark on purpose to be with him. Acerbus was a very odd mortal, but, in addition to a very fine person, was a good and worthy man.

It would be well if historians, as it would if others, would do their duty, and they are apt enough to neglect it, and therefore we think fit to give our brethren a jog in this place, not such a jog as Old Comical gave a man one day who knocked him down to put him in mind of a thing he were like to forget:—no—a touch on the

elbow, to press the moral of things on their readers, as they push the pen along, as we shall now do in regard to his lordship and his wig. His shame and confusion came, you see, reader, from his attempt to deceive others. Look you, reader, if you have a false nose, a leg which is not of the growth of your own proper body, or a wig, pull them off at once and show them to every body, and then, if you have the chance to drop a nose, or a wig, it will beget pity and commiseration, and not, as in his lordship's case, contempt and laughter.

To return: Genevieve and the philosopher must needs be thrusting in their heads, but we cannot attend to them at present; we have got Lady Charlotte Orby on our hands, and must proceed with her. She thought fit to make an apology to Lord George E. for smiting off his peruke, and his lordship bowed, but was a little too angry to speak: after which, there was a great deal said about wigs, and knocks on the pate, which was all very pretty, and some extremely sublime, quite equal to the highest flights of the historic muse, but we must beg leave to let the matter pass.

The next morning, which was a very fine one, the 23d of August, new style, Harry Lamsbroke arose and put himself in readiness to attend Lady Charlotte on her way to the castle; she ran down stairs with her cheeks glowing like the rose to meet her love, and they set off together. Whether Lady Charlotte put her clogs on, or not, we cannot find; some say she was in too great a hurry, and got wet in the feet, while others, again, assert, that she not only put on her clogs, but drew a pair of water-proof boots on over them, which she borrowed of one Charles Cabbagestalk, Mr. Grove's gardener. But as in other histories, so in this, matters

of the greatest importance must, at times, be left in doubt for want of documents.

To proceed: many private meetings having taken place between Harry and Lady Charlotte since we gave an account of their conversation in the meadow, fear and reserve had fled at the approach of love, and all those cold forms and ceremonies which keep ladies and gentlemen at a distance from each other, were discarded by Lady Charlotte and her Harry, but yet it was "Sir," and "My lady" in public and before folks, while "Dear Harry," and "Dear Charlotte," were whispered in the private meadow or the lonely grove. The lovers had now come to a little shrubbery in their walk, that bounded Mr. Grove's plantations, which ran on towards the lake and the ferry, when Lady Charlotte, for some reason, sat herself down upon a little mole-hill—she could not be tired so soon—but, however, not to make a fuss about it, she sat down upon a mole-hill, and Harry, not to miss a good example, sat down close at her side upon another, which the moles had made on purpose, close to it. Harry then took her hand, a pretty little toy which he now used to play with, and began pulling her rings off and putting them on again, and presently he put one of them upon a certain finger, which made her ladyship blush and sigh at the same time; "My dearest Charlotte," said he, putting his arms round her waist, and fixing his eyes upon her glowing face, "how long must we keep our love a secret thus? Your father has consented, by letter, to our union, and your mother, though a little reluctantly, has now given her consent, notwithstanding Lord George E. is so much her favourite."

"Your safety, my dear Harry," said she, fondly smil-

ing in his eyes, "is the only thing that remains to be consulted in this matter; you have two very dangerous rivals who will stick at nothing to take your life as soon as they know how much I love you."

"But my dearest of all dear things on earth, even my life itself not excepted," said he, "they must know this or we remain unhappy:—let us see if this cannot be contrived; let us sit here a little and consult about it, we are come a good way on our walk, and have some time to spare; if we can keep our love a secret, why may we not keep our union a secret too?"

A thought came into Lady Charlotte's mind; which painted her lovely face and neck all over with vermillion.

"What impediment remains?" continued he; "my father, since you have contrived to give him an insight into the ruinous state of Lord George's affairs, no longer stands up for his friend with you, and, upon that ground, has given me his consent to marry you—come, my dearest love, let us take this advice; I know a friend who will, upon proper testimonials of the consent of all parties, unite us secretly—and, the ceremony once over, my enemies may make the best of it—O my sweetest love," said he, "say it shall be so," and clasping her in his arms, kissed her two or three times, we cannot say which, but it is like he kissed her as long as she would suffer such barbarous usage.—At that moment, Lord George and the baronet, who had dogged the lovers, and, concealing themselves in a bush at hand, had overheard their conversation, rushed out, and fell upon poor Harry with their sticks, without mercy, and it were odds they had left him dead upon the spot, if Old Comical, hearing Lady Charlotte's

cries, had not come in with his crabstick in time to save his life.

Now some may object to this history, that there is too much kissing in it, but if men and women will do such things, who can help it? When a love story is a-telling, what will the ladies say to us if we do not come to particulars? What brings them into court to hear trials for adultery, if they do not wish rather to be squeezed to death than not come to particulars? If the ladies think a kiss is a good thing, will they not say, "Dear me! what a pity it is that a good thing should be lost!" If they knew that no more kissing were to come in it, would they not throw our history down and read no more of it? "Well," say the ladies, "if there is any harm in kissing, why do such grave folks as bishops and archbishops marry pretty women? If they only married ladies to put them into sermon-cases, lawn sleeves would not be quite so much to their liking.—Stuff and nonsense! An archbishop may take a lady in his arms with his lawn sleeves on and kiss her, and no harm done—if she be his own wife.

To return, and travellers must step aside if need calls, Harry Lamsbroke, to give him his due, when he saw Lord George E. rushing upon him with his stick raised, ran in to him, and would have wrested it out of his hand, if the baronet had not come behind him and struck him to the ground with a blow from a loaded cane. He then, poor fellow, lay stunned at their mercy, and was e'en forced to take what they pleased to give him, which amounted to a very severe beating, before Old Comical came in and diverted the gentlemen with his crabstick; and a little of it went a great way, according to the custom of very good things.

Now as soon as Old Comical had cleared the ground, Lady Charlotte ran to poor Harry's assistance, and found him stretched out upon the grass sadly bruised from head to foot. This sad affair befel at a little distance from Genevieve's cottage, where Old Comical got a comfortable wheel-barrow, laid Harry upon some straw, and wheeled him away, for so he desired the thing to be, wheeled him away to the castle: and it was very wisely done, for there he knew his enemies could not get at him, for when Lady Charlotte was there Mr. Decastro had refused them admittance. But they were not like to give Harry any further trouble at present, here or any where else, as will be seen.

Now it came to pass, as the route lay through Old Crab's grounds, Old Crab met the procession. "What the devil have you got in the wheel-barrow, John?" quoth he. Upon which Lady Charlotte, who was walking in tears by the side of poor Harry's litter, told the story. "This comes of telling lies, you young jade," quoth Old Crab.

"Telling lies, uncle!" said she.

"Telling lies, uncle!" sung Old Crab through his nose—"yes, telling lies, you hussy!"

"Telling what lies, uncle?" said she.

"You're a crafty slut," quoth Old Crab, "and deserve to be hanged; if they had beaten his brains out it would have been your fault; you have been playing a pretty game, ye young toad, and they would have served you right if they had broken your bones for your pains; what business had you, ye young minx, to keep two fools at your tail for your sport, and be hanged to you? what could you expect when they found out the cheat but to get Harry's bones broken?"

The History of Mr. John Decastro

I have stood by and looked at this game, and expected how it would end: I wish they had laid the cudgel on the right back; but perhaps you are worse hurt than if they had banged your body instead of Harry's."

Lady Charlotte had not a word to say, for she found Old Crab to be in the secret; so she stood one side of the wheel-barrow and cried.

"The devil owed you a shame and I am glad 'tis come, you deceitful young gipsy; if my wench had played such pranks, I would have cut her head off." Upon which Old Crab dropt his eye into the barrow, and seeing poor Harry bleed sadly, he bade Old Comical make the best of his way to the castle; and, mounting old Crop, rode away to fetch Dr. Grosvenor.

Upon the doctor's arrival at the castle, he found Harry in a fainting fit occasioned by the loss of blood, his head being cut open in a terrible manner.—Genevieve soon heard the matter, and came instantly to the castle to comfort Lady Charlotte, who, upon finding Harry to be in danger, fell into a great trouble. Old Crab called at Mr. Grove's house on his way as he returned, and told the story, though he had not much time for talking, for it may be remembered that it was Sunday morning, so away went old Crop with Old Crab upon her back, and a sermon full of weighty matter in his pocket.

As soon as Lord George saw Sir Harry knocked down by Old Comical, he took to his heels and ran for his life: and it came to pass, that when he could run no farther he stopt—what are another's bones to a man when his own are in any danger? Not a straw—a man cannot get broken bones mended for nothing—it is devilish dear work—and 'tis best to take care of

them. So Sir Harry thought, who crawled away as fast as he could upon his hands and knees, for Old Comical made a quadruped of him; yes, crawled away into a great wood of stinging nettles, for he expected that Old Comical's clapper would strike more than one upon his bell-metal: but as good luck would have it he was too much taken up with poor Harry to look to any thing further than clearing the ground of his enemies. After lying by at least an hour, Lord George had the bravery to return to the field of battle, and poking his nose out of a thick holly-bush to see if the enemy held possession of it, the coast being clear, he came on to look for the baronet's body, whom he supposed to be dead from the great thump he heard given upon his carcass. He presently found his hat, which was a sign that the enemy did not look for plunder, and presently saw the head that belonged to it raised above the stinging nettles to see if the foe were returned to the field, and found a friend instead come to look for the wounded; and in good time, for he could not rise without help, hardly indeed with it. Not knowing what might come of the beating which they had given Harry, they called a council of war, and agreed upon a speedy retreat. Leaving a spy upon the enemy's ground to bring in intelligence how matters were like to be, they fell back to an inn on the public road, and lay by till he brought them some account of Harry's situation which frightened them out of the north of England.

Dr. Grosvenor had said that Harry could not live, the skull was certainly not fractured, but the symptoms in the head were very bad, and certainly proved that the brain had suffered a dreadful concussion. This intelligence was brought to Lord George and the baro-

net by a person employed for that purpose, and they made all speed out of that part of the world, and all other parts that were within a hundred miles of it.

When the doctor came to visit Harry in the evening, Genevieve told him that Lady Charlotte had locked herself into her room, would admit no person, and had neither eaten nor drank the whole day. The doctor said she must be attended to, and her door must be forced if she refused people admittance; upon which, as soon as he had done with his patient, he and Genevieve went to her room, but all knocking and calling were in vain. He ordered the door to be forced, when Genevieve set one of her vast shoulders against it, and sent it at one push into the room, and its lock and hinges along with it. Now the first thing they did when they came in was to look for Lady Charlotte. Genevieve undrew the bed curtains and found the bed in great disorder, but no Lady Charlotte! Poor girl! there lay her hat torn in two pieces on the bed, and several large locks of her pretty hair, which she had pulled off her head in her distress! blood, too, was found upon the bed clothes, the sight of which turned Genevieve pale. Almost every part of the room was searched which could conceal a mouse, but in vain, and the doctor, suspecting the worst, opened the window to see if she had thrown herself out of it, not thinking, at the moment, if she had that she might not be able to come back to shut it. Mr. and Mrs. Decastro, Julia, and Lady Budemere now came into the room, when Julia, after much wonder had been expressed at her getting out of the room and leaving the door locked, turned the door over as it lay on the floor to look, which the others did not think of, if the key were inside

the lock, and to their greater astonishment, it was found to be there: upon this they all stood staring at each other without speaking one word.

Now Genevieve, who stood at the foot of the bed, which was a very large one, and had curtains on it large enough for the main-sail of a seventy-four, chanced to take a step back and felt something large through the curtain, which she immediately pulled aside and discovered poor Lady Charlotte clinging in a half senseless state to one of the bed-posts. Her eyes were fixed, her face was pale, her hair in disorder, and her bosom bare: her neck and her arms and her clothes were spotted with blood—she took no notice of those who stood round her. The ladies hurried out of the room in terror, all except Genevieve, attended by Mr. Decastro—when Dr. Grosvenor attempted, with Genevieve's assistance, whose tears ran down fast into her bosom, to get Lady Charlotte away from the bed-post. Genevieve used some force, but desisted through tenderness. It was in vain to speak to her, she took no notice at all of any thing they could say, and appeared to be in a kind of stupor. Dr. Grosvenor said that she must be taken away, when Genevieve unclasped her arms by main force, and she made no further resistance, but suffered them to place her in a chair, and the doctor endeavoured to get a flood of tears from her, which he said must be done if possible. She remained, however, unmoved. Genevieve wept over her and said, she was sure she had lost her senses. The doctor agreed that she was in a dangerous way, and, begging Genevieve to stay with her till he returned, left the room. In the doctor's absence she took all the means which the doctor suggested to bring her to weep, but

in vain; she raised her gently from the chair, and carried her about the room, and felt as if she had a dead lump rather than a living creature in her arms; she then tried if she could get her to walk, which she did slowly, but she soon ceased and hung upon Genevieve.

The doctor now came into the room, and taking Lady Charlotte's bloody gown off put another on her, and after Genevieve, by his order, had gathered up her hair, composed her dress, and washed the spots of blood off her face and neck, both of which she had wounded with her nails, her breast especially, the doctor said she must be brought into Harry's room, who was grown a great deal better than he had expected to find him. Genevieve, knowing Lady Charlotte's temper, said she had best be carried there and left alone with Harry: of which the doctor approved, and Genevieve took her into her arms and carried her into Harry's apartment.

As soon as she came into it, the doctor, who narrowly watched her, took notice that she moved her eyes, which she had not yet done, as if to look for something. The doctor said it was a good sign, and presently, seeing Harry hold out his hand to her as he lay on a sofa, she gave a faint scream and cried out "He's alive! he's alive!" and dropped her head on Genevieve's shoulder. Poor Genevieve had a sad time of it, for she wept as if she would break her heart. Harry and the doctor did all they could to comfort her, when Lady Charlotte raised her head off Genevieve's shoulder and turned it quite round, as if to search for Harry. The doctor then bade Genevieve put her upon the sofa near Harry and left the room: but Genevieve, instead of going out with Dr. Grosvenor, slipt behind the bed curtains to be upon the watch. Harry, who was a good deal recovered,

not knowing any one to be in his room but themselves, put his arm round Lady Charlotte's neck—he had but one he could use, poor fellow, and she fixed her eyes in a sort of dead stare on his face. Harry then kissed her lips, which seemed to rouse her like an electric shock, for she cried out, “O my love! my love!” and broke into a flood of tears on his bosom.

Poor Genevieve sobbed quite loud enough to be heard by any person in the room, and do what she could, she could not restrain herself; she found that they did not perceive it, however, and still lay on the watch, glad to find Lady Charlotte shed tears, which she now did very plentifully. Harry, who was the only person in the world at all like to comfort her, said he was a great deal better, and thought he should come down stairs and breakfast with her the next day. There was a glass with some egg and wine near him, which he persuaded her to drink; she seemed to be thirsty, for she drank it all—it was the only nourishment she had taken the whole day—when she had taken it she came close to Harry, and leaning her head on his shoulder, received and returned his kisses with tenderness and rapture. Genevieve could stand her ground no longer, but stole unperceived out of the room, and told Dr. Grosvenor not all she had seen and heard, but as much as he wanted to know. The doctor now came and knocked at the door, Harry called him in. He found Lady Charlotte reclining on the opposite end of the sofa, quite overcome by the wine and egg which she had taken. Upon Harry telling her she should come again the next morning, she willingly left the room, when Julia assisted Genevieve to put her to bed; the doctor followed to leave his instructions.

Lady Charlotte owed a great deal of her agonies to her odd temper; she had piqued herself upon concealing her affection for this beautiful youth, whom she loved with all the passion and tenderness that the fondest of all female bosoms was capable of, and the discovery of the cheat, which she had carried so well, stung her to the quick. This, added to the shame she were like to owe upon it, and her terror for poor Harry's safety, were bringing her apace to a frenzy. The doctor said she had a narrow escape—forbade the subject, or any the least allusion to it, to be touched upon in her hearing, and gave hopes that all would be well in a short time with both of them, when they ought to be united, if possible, immediately.

As the doctor said, so it befel; in three weeks' time all was well again, but the bruises which Lady Charlotte had given her bosom, required the doctor's attention almost as much as poor Harry's wounds. Now we are on this subject we will add, that as soon as Harry and Lady Charlotte were well, they both stole away in the night, and not a soul could tell or guess which way or whither they were gone: her ladyship had put on great reserve, talked but little to any but her Harry, and seemed to have something more than common on her mind. On being called one morning to come to breakfast, she, Harry Lamsbroke, and her ladyship's maid were not to be found!

CHAPTER IV

Genevieve and the Philosopher come again on the Stage—An Eye had to their matters.

THE sad effects of deceit appear too plainly in the last chapter to need any further illustration in this.—We shall now turn our style to another love affair—surely the ladies will have enough of it:—one word to keep the dogs from barking—it is no disgrace, but an honour to the most modest woman in the world to be in love, and to be pleased with love, N. B. as long as it is innocent.

The philosopher could see that Genevieve was much in love with him without so much as one eye open, and he broke the matter to his father and mother and Old Crab one day as they sat together.

“Buzzy,” said Mr. Decastro, for so he used to call Acerbus, “we do not at all wonder that you have seen this thing with your eyes shut, it has long since been visible enough to us whose eyes are open, and, to tell you the truth, we have just been talking about it before you came into the room; and brother Bat says, it is high time his ward was settled in the world, for he tells me, which I could scarce believe, but time steals away, that Jenny is now three-and-twenty years of age; she has had a great many lovers, drawn, as she needs will have it, rather by the effluvia of her gold than the smell of her merits, and now declares, that unless she can find one to whom money is no temptation, she will

never marry. As this is the case, I think she will scarce get lover to her mind, unless a philosopher takes a liking to her."

"You have found out at last," said Mrs. Decastro, "that she is in love with you, have you, Buzzy?"

"Mother," quoth he, "in good truth I have."

"Well," quoth she, "but how do you stand affected toward her?"

"Verily," quoth the philosopher, "I love pretty Jenny."

"Come," said Mr. Decastro, "so far all goes well—what d'ye think of this, brother Bat?"

"Why," quoth Old Crab, "I think the jade wants a husband, but she's a turbulent toad, I can hardly recommend her—Buzzy, you will get your brains knocked out."

"Well," quoth the philosopher, "I am come for your advice, and will act under your directions; if you think ill of this matter I will return to the University; if well, I will tell pretty Jenny my mind with a loving kiss the first time we meet: what do you think of this matter, uncle? speak."

"You dog," quoth Old Crab, "you will get your bones broken!—canst relish matrimony, dost think, with a cudgel by way of sauce to it? ha, Buzzy?"

"If so it be," quoth the philosopher, "that pretty Jenny will give broken bones and the knocking out of brains by way of proofs of her love for a man, I will tell her, at first hand, that I will take her love for granted, without putting her upon the trouble of giving any such testimony of the matter: it will be time when I ask Jenny if she loves me, as if I doubted it, for her to come in with her proofs, and break my bones in

order to convince me of her affection; but when a man admits a thing to be thus, or thus, there will be no need of any argument to enforce the belief of that which is already granted.—But, if it so be, that I am called upon for mine objections to pretty Jenny, my main objection is her money.”

Old Crab sucked up his cheeks at this, and Mr. and Mrs. Decastro fell a-laughing. “Very good, very good, and mighty well,” quoth the philosopher; “but answer me, honoured sir: can that be a good thing that puts a worse thing in the place of a better thing, and turns out a good thing to make way for a bad thing?”

“No, certainly,” quoth Mr. Decastro.

“It is well,” quoth the philosopher, “it is very well—but answer me, if a man be a good thing is it a bad thing if he be taken for other than a good thing?”

“Certainly a bad thing,” said Mr. Decastro.

“Is a good thing turned out to make way for a bad thing if a bad thing be put in the place of a good thing?” quoth Acerbus.

“If the good thing be put out,” said Mr. Decastro.

“Is any thing better than life?” quoth Acerbus.

“No,” said Mr. Decastro.

“Is that which is a dearer thing a better thing?” quoth Acerbus.

“Certainly,” said Mr. Decastro.

“Is honour dearer than life?” quoth the philosopher.

“It is,” quoth Mr. Decastro.

“Then if what is dearer than life is better than life, there is something better than life,” said the philosopher.

“Brother John,” quoth Old Crab, “thou’rt an ass.”

“Come, I confess it,” said Mr. Decastro; “Buzzy

has such a twisting way with him—but what's all this to the purpose?"

"Is honour a better thing than money," said the philosopher, "or is money a better thing than honour?"

"Honour must needs be best," it was answered.

"Then if money come in and turn honour out, a worse thing puts out and takes place of a better thing even than life, or how?"

"So it appears," said Mr. Decastro, "from what has been granted."

"If honour be a good thing, what brings hurt to honour must be a bad thing—is that true?" said the philosopher.

"It is very true," said Mr. Decastro.

"How!" said the philosopher, "is money a bad thing?"

Mr. Decastro stared, and said, "No."

"Can any love be good love which hath any other than a good thing for its object?" said Acerbus.

"Certainly not," said Mr. Decastro.

"Is that a bad thing or a good thing that brings the motive for a man's love in question?" said the philosopher.

"It is a bad thing, surely," said Mr. Decastro.

"Will not money do this?" said Acerbus.

"In a marriage suit it certainly will," said Mr. Decastro.

"Then money is not a good thing but a bad thing," said the philosopher, "but we this moment denied it to be a bad thing."

"So far, so far," quoth Mr. Decastro, rubbing his forehead—but, but, but—"

"You look to be in doubt," said the philosopher;

"let us see what can be done for you: can a good thing be a bad thing and a good thing at the same time?"

"Why, no," said Mr. Decastro, "I will swear to that."

"How!" said Acerbus, "is not money food to one and poison to another? and that, too, at one and the same time?"

"Why, that's true again," said Mr. Decastro; "faith I did not think of that."

"True!" said the philosopher, "how can that be?" putting a guinea down upon the table—"what is that, food, poison, or a guinea?"

Old Crab gave Acerbus a look, upon which he said he meant no light thing, but to show the consequences of unconditional answers.

"You are laughing at your father, you dog," quoth Old Crab, "d'ye call that no light thing? If you are wise your father will be; but if a son hath a fool for his father, he is the greatest fool of the two if he proves it to his face."

"Come, come," said Mr. Decastro, "I know Buzzy's a good boy, and I love to hear him chop logic, though, I own it, I know nothing at all about the matter: but, I don't know how it is, he always makes me as giddy as a goose. Come, Buzzy, what has Jenny to do with all this?"

"Why, sir, I said, to take a step back, her money was my objection to her, for what brings a good thing into doubt must needs be so far a bad thing, and put out a good thing to make way for a bad thing, for it puts out credit to make room for suspicion, for who takes a rich wife that will be thought to dislike her money? and who that takes a poor one, will be thought

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to tell a lie at the altar? and who will not put a large fortune among the just causes and impediments why two persons should not be joined together, if a man must needs purchase a wife at the expense of his honour? I know pretty Jenny loves me, and I can love pretty Jenny; but what can we do with all this money?"

"Come, Buzzy," quoth Old Crab, "take it as the old philosopher took it when it was offered him—'not for myself,' said he, 'but to show folks the right use of it.'"

"Verily, uncle Bat," quoth the philosopher, "you are afraid that Jenny should die before she is married, and all her money come to you, for so it stands in her father's will, you say."

"A plague upon her money!" quoth Old Crab, "I'll have none of it—I have as much as I want—I wish the toad were married once, though I don't want to see a poor fellow's head knocked off his shoulders."

"She would not have had so much money if you had held your hand, uncle Bat; you made it more than it was at first," said Acerbus.

"Well," said Mrs. Decastro, "this is the first time any lover objected to his mistress because she had one hundred thousand pounds to her fortune."

"As I live," quoth the philosopher, "few people know that more ill than good comes of much money; and this I could prove by a variety of deductions, but I am loath to spend your time."

"Brother Bat," quoth Mr. Decastro, "what can be done in this case?"

"Why," quoth Old Crab, "Buzzy must let the jade alone if he will not take her and her money for better for worse: then if she dies I shall be plagued with it—and some may think I keep her unmarried with an eye

to it—Come, Buzzy, if you like the woman, take her, and we will see if we can tie her money up.”

“Uncle Bat,” quoth the philosopher, “I will have nothing to do with it, my father allows me plenty.”

“Well,” quoth Old Crab, “suppose we tie up the money in her own apron, if she hath no objection—and she will not stick out ’tis like:—there are few women but are glad enough to get the command of the purse; she will not quarrel with any upon that score; it is what the sex will be eternally clawing for, though their husband’s eyes lie in their way to it.”

“Well, well,” quoth the philosopher, “if you can keep me out of the way of it, that is all I want.”

“It can be done as I say, and left under her direction and appointment,” quoth Old Crab.

“My dear,” quoth Mr. Decastro to his wife, “Jenny is in the library, waiting for Buzzy there, for I saw her go into it after she hunted all over the garden for him; I have been much amused with watching her—go to her and tell her there is a young man ready to pay his addresses to her, if her money can be tied up so as not to bite him: go and sound her, but name no names.”

Genevieve at that moment came into the room, for the tea and coffee were brought in, and blushed at the sight of the philosopher.

“Come here, you jade,” quoth Old Crab; “have you a mind to be married if you can find a man you could be glad to eat up at a mouthful?”

“I am as like to eat a man as to marry one,” said she, “as far as my mind goes in the matter.”

“Why,” quoth Old Crab, “there is a man whom you could be glad to swallow, shoes and all, I know, if you could get a fair gulp at him!”

"O my dear uncle," said she, crimsoned over head and ears, "how you talk—Lord ——"

"Lord! aye, Lord indeed," sung Old Crab through the nose, "if you aren't in love I'll be hanged: come, I can find you a husband if you can agree to keep all your money to yourself."

"Aye," said she, "that's the trash they are all after."

"You hasty slut," quoth Old Crab, "hear a man speak and be hanged!—he would have your money——"

"Then he shall not have it, nor will I have him, uncle," said she, "and so I will save you further talking."

"Ah, ye chattering baggage!" quoth Old Crab, "will you hear what I have got to say or won't ye? The man would have your money put out of his reach, that he may save his credit in making such a rich gipsy an offer: what d'ye think of that? chained up, for he hates money as he hates the devil, and would speak his mind if your great bag did not hang in the way."

Genevieve very well knew the philosopher's mind about money, which was one thing that made her so fond of him; she had the audacity to cast an eye at him as he sat opposite to her, but his eyes were shut, and his spirit was walking in the groves of Academus.

"Uncle," said she, "this is strange news—and if it came from another I should take it for a jest."

"Do you consent?" said Old Crab.

"Pray, my dear uncle," said she, "who can this be?"

"Let him name himself," quoth Old Crab, "when you see him, and if you don't see him, it will not be for want of looking after him, you slut, you make good use of your eyes that way."

Upon which Genevieve handed the philosopher a cup

of coffee, jogging his elbow at the same time to call his senses up, that were most of them fast asleep. As soon as Acerbus opened his eyes she darted her own bright stars directly into them with one of the sweetest smiles that ever charmed a man's heart.

"Aha, Jenny," quoth he, "how long have you been here, we have been talking about you?"

Genevieve's face was as red as scarlet, for she took it into her head that it might just be possible that the philosopher was the man. This put her into a flutter, and she spilt some of the coffee upon his hand.—It is supposed when folks are in a flutter that the animal spirits dash through their pipes into the muscles by spirts and jerks which breed those irregular motions that make people spill coffee upon the flesh of others that lie in the way of that very terrible liquor, as it now happened—forasmuch as the philosopher got the back side of his hand scalded. She might have kissed his hand and made it well, but she was too proud for that.—One reason why pride is called a vice is because it keeps women from doing impudent things, and that is a pity.

"What an awkward two-handed jade it is," quoth Old Crab; "who's to buy carpets for you to spoil?"

"My dear uncle," said she, "an accident may happen to the Graces."

"I never heard of their spoiling people's carpets," quoth Old Crab, "not I, or brought in as a saving clause for a clumsy cow."

Old Crab was in a pleasant humour this evening.

The philosopher arose with great dignity, and taking a folio edition of Plato's works by Marsilius Ficinus, walked into the shrubbery.

“My dear aunt,” said Genevieve to Mrs. Decastro, “I vow I have quite forgot to gather your roses, I will go and get them while I think of it,” and out she ran after Plato and the Philosopher. And now the ambuscado in the rose-bushes was laid, and the glove thrown in the walk with the hope that the philosopher might pick it up and eat it: this was a trap; it was but a glove: very true, it was only a glove: it was a great pity she did not pull off one of her stockings and throw it in the way. But of this thus far.—Hereafter Acerbus paid his addresses, as we have said, and made Genevieve so hot that she ran into the water, as hath likewise been said—so far this matter is topped up: very good—yes, topped up so far, but we must leave the rick to settle, it will take another load by-and-by.

Genevieve, on her way to the bathing-house, overtook Julia, who loved water like a fish, and was going to get a dip:—so she told the pretty milk-maid that she had a proposal from the philosopher, and said she should like vastly to be married the same day with her, but did not know how to bring the thing about.

“My day draws very near, Jenny,” said Julia, “and I am frightened out of my wits whenever I think of it; it will be a terrible day, Jenny, don’t you think so? and yet I look for great happiness in it; for it will make my dear George my own for ever.”

“I believe it will, your George; for Acerbus says, whom now, Julia, I will call my Acerbus, (I am the happiest woman in the world; I will not even except you, and I think you must be as happy as any, indeed I do).”

“Well, Jenny, but you don’t tell me what it is that Acerbus says of my honey—sweet George?”

“Oh, I had forgot;—why,” said Genevieve, “he says that George is a very good young man in a moral and religious sense, and that is the surest ground for a woman, by marriage, to make her George her own for ever; for there are a great many Georges, my dear Julia, that marriage will not make a woman’s own, as you call it, but every woman’s Georges that will have them.”

“My dear Jenny,” said Julia, “how can that be, when my papa says, that if a man marries two women he will be hanged, if one do not die before he marries another?”

“Ah, my dear Julia,” said Genevieve, “the thing is too shocking to be explained; I wish I did not know half that I know of the world; and that you may never know a fiftieth part of the ill that is in it.”

“But, my dear Jenny,” said Julia, “tell me how this thing can be, will you?”

“No, no, Julia, it is too bad: wait till you are married and ask your husband.”

“If there is any thing very bad in it, I don’t think he will be able to tell me,” said Julia.

“Why,” said Genevieve, “it is good to know what ill is, in some sense; but yet I think it is best to know nothing of it. I wish I knew as little of it as you know of it, Julia, and had lived, as you have lived, among the sheep and cows, whose innocent lives put man to the blush, and raise the beast above humanity. I sincerely thank heaven for the escapes which I have had by its kind help since I have been made a show of in the world: I have ever wished, Julia, to be married; woman is made to be married; but of all the rubbish of the creation, viz., men of fashion, as they are called, that have made

me offers, not one came forward but added a cartload, in his turn, to my detestation of the sex!—I must ever except poor Smith, but I have told you his sad story:—at last my dear Acerbus makes me amends for all. Oh, Julia, I ever loved him—I will put my soul into his hand; he, I am sure, will make it eternally happy.”

“My cousin is a handsome young man, Jenny.”

“It is nonsense, Julia; beauty is but a shadow—if you love George because he is handsome only, you build your house upon the sand.”

“I do not,” said she; “but when George comes to marry me, I could be glad to see him bring his beauty along with him too: our beauty, Jenny, will be something for George and I to play with while we are young, and when we grow old we will come to our stores:—Ah, Jenny, you think so, as well as I, I know very well.”

Genevieve said, with a fine blush, “Why, Julia, I do not think the worse of my Acerbus because he is a handsome man; I like him all the better.”

“Ah, Jenny!” said Julia, and laughed.

“I’ll drown you, you toad, I will,” said Genevieve, and, taking Julia in her arms, for they were in the water, taking Julia in her arms, gave her a good ducking.

CHAPTER V

The Earl of Budemere's Return to England—Takes a House near Hindermark—His sudden Death.

IT would not be, perhaps, worth our while, if we had time, to inquire how it is that men of large estates come to be, for the most part, sad profligates?—Well, but who should be, if those very people are not who have it the most in their power to be? Are they not educated with great fuss and very little pains? Are not all the schoolmasters in the world afraid of them? Who dares flog them when they are boys, and who dares to correct them when they come to be men? We, ourselves, bring the character of the Earl of Budemere with fear and trembling before the public, in order to be a warning to men, who, like him, walk upon the quarter-deck of the world, lest they, like him, make a false step, and tumble overboard, neck and heels, as he did, fished up, indeed, by Old Crab, but almost drowned.—So, my lord, if you chance to read this, our history, take no such whim into your pate, as that we hate great folks, and at the very moment, too, when we are doing them the best turn we can.—Pray, why are a great man's tutors and masters paid to be quiet, and let him have his head? If they check him, why are they turned out, and others of better tempers, and more willing to put their pay into their pockets, and give themselves and their pupil no further trouble, put into their places? Thus it is the young gentleman

gets ruined, and who can help it, if the gardener is afraid to pull up a weed, lest he get turned out of his garden?

The Earl of Budemere, of whom we are now to speak, was bred in this way; he came into a fortune of forty thousand pounds a-year, at the old lord's death, and took all his father's honours when his father could keep them no longer: he had a good constitution, and thought that one of the last things he should want would be health: he had a good estate, and thought that one of the last things he should want would be money: so he laid about him, until he found he was mistaken in both cases. When he was one-and-twenty, he had a woman stuck into his bosom by his friends, because they thought it fitting that he should marry, and knew, better than he did, whom he ought to choose, and this lady was one of Mr. Decastro's sisters. He was civil to her, and she was civil to him, and that was something; but they never loved each other, and would have been the last people on earth, perhaps, that would have come together, if they had been left to choose for themselves. Now, when Lord Budemere could not find a woman in his own house whom he liked, he looked for one in another, which was likely enough, and not at all unnatural, and his lordship, to give him his due, was a good deal upon the look-out in this way, as, we think, hath already been pretty well shown. He never had more than one child by Lady Budemere, the beautiful Lady Charlotte Orby, of whom much hath been already said, and much more may be said: if he had had more, perhaps, he would have been less extravagant; as matters fell out, however, he came to be forty years of age before he had quite ruined himself,

and there was some economy in that, when he had brought his affairs into such confusion, that he really did not know what he could call his own.

His lordship's matters being in such a sickly state, it was high time to call in the physician, and Old Crab, whose professional skill was well known, was applied to in this case, as we have said; which, indeed, differed so little from Mr. Decastro's, that we need not come to particulars, any further than to say, that Old Crab, who spoke well of nobody and did good to every body, after a torrent of abuse, undertook his lordship's case. When he came to look into his affairs he found a very desperate case, indeed. If money could be got, it was taken on any terms; he found estates mortgaged for as much as they were worth, leases sold, timber cut down and disposed of at any price, strip and spoil on all hands, money borrowed in every way, and in the worst of every possible way; in short, no stone left unturned if a sixpence could be found, or could be expected to be found under it! Old Crab got into an ocean of hot water in this business, and came to such a quarrel with Sir John Lamsbroke, Harry's father, about a Newmarket debt, which fell due upon some horse-race, that, upon being struck by the baronet with a whip, Old Crab took him off the ground, flung him down a staircase, and broke his arm.

If Old Crab, indeed, had paid all that was demanded, Lord and Lady Budemere might have come to the parish for their bread, if they could have made out a settlement. Old Crab, however, fought most nobly in the breach, and what by making large deductions from some demands, wholly refusing others, ploughing up two fine parks, turning them into farms, and letting

them at good rents, pulling down great houses for which he could get no tenants, building less, and letting them to the best advantage, and other the like measures of prudence, fifteen thousand pounds a-year were saved out of the wreck of this noble property, and the family disentangled from the world.

When he looked into matters he was not a little astonished to find Lady Charlotte's fortune not aboard ship when matters were in a sinking condition; for Old Crab knew that Lord Budemere had the care of her money. But Lady Charlotte was a cunning baggage, and, like a rat, ran out of a falling house, and took her cash along with her, for some reasons best known to herself; and, as good luck would have it, she came of age just in time. The money stuck in his lordship's hand like pitch, but she brought soap and sand, and a lawyer by way of scrubbing-brush, scoured out every penny, and left his lordship's hands as white as snow:—what a nice thing it is to have clean hands!

“My father don't want money, sir,” said her ladyship to one of his creditors, whom teeth and nails could not tear out of the house; “he has just paid me fifty thousand pounds:—Mr. Petticraft,” said she, to her lawyer, “show this gentleman the letter of attorney: if you are wise,” added she, “you will be civil and leave the house.”

This was one of the conditions between the sly puss and her father: Mr. Petticraft knew his cue, and told the aforesaid gentleman as much as made for his purpose, who seemed to think that a man must be rich who could pay fifty thousand pounds, and was so civil as to leave the house for fear of offending his lordship, who grew to be a very terrible man on a sudden. Lady

Charlotte was certainly in the right to get hold of her fortune, but not quite so right, some may think, in the means she took to do so. Money is the saliva of the devil.

After a great deal of trouble, and a great deal of quarrelling, Old Crab did much more than any one ever looked to be done for him. Indeed he risked his life in his lordship's service; for, as he was returning to London out of Berkshire, he was waylaid, and shot at by one of the creditors, whom he killed on the spot with a blow struck with his fist upon the man's heart; a bullet went through Old Crab's wig, and carried half his ear along with it. Upon his return into the North, after he paid all, and counted what money was left in the bag, he said to Lady Budemere, one day after dinner at the castle, "You may send a letter, if you will, to your husband, and tell him we have a bit of bread left for him if he hath a mind to come back to England and eat it."

He flung a scroll of paper into her lap as she sat opposite to him, that contained the totals of receipts and expenditures, with the balance left in their favour, which appeared to be fifteen thousand pounds a-year. As soon as Lady Budemere saw it she kissed the paper and wept.—Upon getting a little self-command she began to pour out abundance of gratitude and thanks.

"Aye, aye," quoth Old Crab, interrupting her, "that will do, that will do, the less you say about it I shall be the more pleased:—there, get along and write to your husband, if you think him worth the trouble;—don't stay here and set all the women a-snivelling;" which, indeed, was very much the case, for Mrs. Decastro, and Mrs. B. Decastro, Julia, and Mrs. Grove who were

present, Genevieve had left the room to walk with Aristotle and the philosopher, came down with a great deal of salt water upon the occasion, and shed tears enough, if all had been put in a pond together, to swim a brood of ducks.

Lord Budemere was then at Paris, and, upon the receipt of his wife's letters, came immediately to England, and joined the party at the castle, took a house, belonging to Mr. Grove, near Hindermark, and, in imitation of Mr. Decastro, had a mind to live retired from the world; but, while the house was getting ready for him, he retired from the world in a way he did not expect, for his lordship died of an apoplectic fit, occasioned, as Dr. Grosvenor said, who was called in when he might as well have been called to York, by the excessive joy he felt upon the news of his affairs being so well settled, and himself and all his concerns disembroiled from the world. We are running a little before the time here, but must say a few words, and beg the reader to excuse their coming a little out of order, upon the meeting between his lordship and Mr. Grove. The Hindermark family were on a visit at the castle, when Lord Budemere, who came from Paris as soon as he got the better of an illness, which held him there several months, arrived, not unexpected, for he had named his day. The first person he fixed his eyes on, coming into the room, was Mr. Grove. People who have been bred in courts will meet the devil himself without a sign of any emotion. His lordship paid his respects to all persons present with that ease and elegance which good breeding gives a man, and coming to Mr. Grove he offered him his hand, which Mr. Grove refused, making his lordship a bow in silence.

"I think, sir," said his lordship, a little angry, "after what happened at Bath, the least you could expect was any offer of civility on my part; the moment I saw you I came to a resolution to be silent upon it, and take, perhaps, a fitter opportunity to get your unaccountable behaviour there explained to me; but I confess that, for some reasons, I am not sufficiently master of myself to wait for such explanation beyond the present moment; explain your abrupt departure, sir, and your ill usage of me and my family!"

Mr. Grove was carrying his nose, as his custom was, up to his lordship's ear, in order to deliver a little whisper into it, when Lord Budemere stepped back; for when a man is angry with another he has no mind to come near him, unless he means to knock him down—"Speak out, sir, that all may hear that apology which, I am sure, there is nobody present but must needs expect me to call for."

"Did your lordship see Mr. Petticraft," said Mr. Grove in a low voice, which was little else than a whisper, "before you left Bath?"

"What if I did not," said the peer.

"Then, my lord," resumed Mr. Grove in a whisper,—

"Speak aloud, sir," interrupted Lord Budemere.

"Perhaps, my lord," continued Mr. Grove, still whispering, "your lordship may think even a whisper a little too loud, should I communicate the contents of that paper," putting Lady Charlotte's anonymous letter into his lordship's hand, in the lowest whisper man ever gave breath to.

Lord Budemere read the letter, and turned as pale as death:—he immediately made some excuse to speak

to his servant, and left the room.—Every body present was anxious to know the contents of the paper; but Mr. Grove said, in a whisper, “ it was some secret matter between Lord Budemere and himself,” and put the paper very coolly into his pocket. The butler presently came in with a message from Lord Budemere to Mr. Grove, who immediately left the room. What passed between Mr. Grove and his lordship we never could find, any further than that Mr. Grove promised him not to reveal the contents of the letter; and his lordship could not have found a man, if he had picked out one dumb from his mother’s womb, who could keep a secret better. His lordship and Mr. Grove presently returned with easy faces, and the rest of the party, coming from their dressing-rooms, all walked into the dining-room, and sat down very sociably to dinner.—But these things befel some months after the present time, to which we must now return.

We fear that we shall be deemed inexcusable by some, while we shall, perhaps, get heartily thanked by others, for omitting some very pretty love scenes between Genevieve and Acerbus, and some sweet love letters between George and Julia, who were cruelly parted by Old Crab for romping together, and only allowed to write to one another until the day came to be married, when memorandums of the former, and copies of the latter now lie spread before us. But as the letters would fill a world of paper, and the memorandums another, we earnestly beg to be excused bringing them all in here, notwithstanding they are very full of kisses and other sweet things. Should they be very eagerly called for, however, we will keep them safe under lock and key, and publish them all in two volumes, or twen-

ty-two, if they hold out, by way of appendix to this our history.

Genevieve, after she had tumbled about in the water till she was cool, dressed herself and left the bathing-house; but, instead of returning to the castle, where her old apartment was always kept for her use, instead of returning to the castle where she would be sure to met Acerbus, she bent her steps to the ferry, and, passing over, walked home, meditating upon what had befallen. The coldness of the water, and lapse of a few hours had now, in some degree, allayed the tumult which the philosopher's unexpected attack had occasioned, and, after a little fluttering upon it, she brought herself to a mind to let him marry her as soon as he would, but was not without her fears that he would be very slow in his approaches, and in some alarm too lest he, by the next day, might forget all about his offer. She went to bed in such an odd way that neither Lucy, nor her old nurse, could tell what to make of her, and sometimes thought she must have had a quarrel at the castle where she had dined that day. Lucy asked her if she had got the colic, and Old Nurse watched her eyes to find if she were going mad.

Whatever were the matter with her, however, they were sure she had not lost her appetite, for she ate up two cold chickens, with four plates of ham, and drank a quart of strong beer before she went to bed. The next morning she arose very merry, and sung all the while Lucy dressed her; as soon as she had done, like one who was out of her wits for joy, she took Lucy by her waist and kissed her cheek, and told her she was a good girl, for she had not stuck above half-a-dozen pins into her all the time she was dressing her; and, to say

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the truth, Lucy's hands shook so at seeing her mistress in such an odd taking, that she did nothing but prick her all the while she dressed her.

She had no sooner sat down to her breakfast and put the first dish of tea to her lips, when the bell rang, and in came the philosopher to pay her his first visit.

"Ah, my pretty Jenny," said he, "my sweet, sweet, sweet sweetheart, I need not ask, when I see those roses, how you do."—Saying which, he would have kissed her; but Genevieve, what could ail her? gave him a great push which laid the philosopher at his full length on the carpet.

The philosopher, however, jumped up, and never stood to rub his elbows, which were the first things that came to the ground, but re-attacked her with great spirit, upon which she called him an impudent coxcomb, and asked him to sit down and breakfast with her. He told her he had already breakfasted, and, as he could not stay long, would tell her his errand in few words; and, taking her hand, said, "My pretty sweet Jenny, will you marry me on Saturday next?"

Genevieve dropped her face upon her bosom and blushed; raising it presently she gave him a kind look, and said, "that is Julia's wedding-day."

"I have got a ring and a license," quoth the philosopher, putting them down upon the table; "come, we four will make one day of it: say the word, my sweet Jenny, will you marry me on Saturday?"

"I will," said she.

"Then thus," quoth the philosopher, "I claim you for my wife," and put the ring upon her finger to see if it fitted the pretty thing it was made for, and it made it tingle just as if a nettle had stung it.

Now when two people, who are going the same way together, happen both to be in a hurry, it falls out well enough. This day was Saturday, so one week brought the two weddings together. Our philosopher, who differed from every body else in every thing else, differed from other folks in this thing amongst others; for, whereas, most men court a woman first, and then get her consent to be married afterwards, the philosopher made surer work of it. He got her consent to be married first, and courted her afterwards, which, having read in old books how changeable a thing a woman is, may be the best way. There was no fear of Genevieve, however, whose mind the philosopher knew very well already.

Now, reader, we would give a penny to know whether you would choose rather to stay and dine with Genevieve and her eccentric lover, or walk with us to the farm, and see with how much grace the sweet Julia bore her lover's banishment, or run after Lady Charlotte and Harry Lamsbroke, and see what amends she made her lover for all the hard rubs he had suffered for her sake; but we must let them run where they please, and do what they please, and say nothing more about them, at least at present; and, indeed, any reader of common sagacity may guess what it was that they ran away for; they owed one another a spite, and were willing to be revenged, and, when they returned to the castle, they brought a pretty little boy with them as a proof of it. But Sir John Lamsbroke, Harry's father, getting intelligence of the affair between Lord George E. and his son, came to a quarrel with him upon it, when a duel was the consequence, in which Lord George was shot through the heart. Sir John

stood his trial upon the matter and was acquitted. Hearing that some clown, who worked on Old Crab's farm, had as good as saved his son's life, he sent Old Comical a present of a hundred guineas, which Old Comical returned, with his best compliments, giving Sir John to understand, at the same time, that he was not the man Sir John Lamsbroke took him for.

CHAPTER VI

Genevieve and Julia's Marriages—Genevieve meets with a sad accident—The Philosopher retires to Oxford—Sir John Lamsbroke comes to Oaken Grove—A dreadful thing befalls Julia.

JULIA, whose wedding-day came on apace, was much engaged in making her wedding-clothes, which she begged to be permitted to do, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the great family into which she was coming. If she had brought as much money as she did excellence and beauty into it, George Grove would have been as rich as any man in the world; but there was no lack of money there. Mr. Grove made his son such an ample allowance that Old Crab objected to it, and said, "it would turn the young people's brains:" so Mr. Grove took Old Crab's advice to increase the allowance by degrees as emergencies might require, wisely judging it better to sink the weight of money upon the young man by little and little, by which he might be the better prepared, and, too, the better enabled to bear it. Julia, residing so long at the castle with Genevieve, Lady Charlotte Orby, Mr. and Mrs. Decastro, and other fine folks who came there, got so polished and refined as to become, with grace, the high station which she now was rising to; and, to amuse her mind in her distress, both Genevieve and Lady Charlotte had taught her many things which are considered to be indispensable ingredients in the elegant composition of a gentlewoman.

Genevieve, as soon as the philosopher left her, sent her servant with two notes of invitation to Hindermark, one to George Grove to come and meet his friend the philosopher at dinner, and the other to Mrs. Kerry Tacklecrack, his old maiden aunt, who was come to Hindermark to be present at the nuptials of her nephew George. This invitation pleased the old lady very much, who loved, she said, to see appearances saved, and a little prudence in young women; for Genevieve made no secret of Acerbus's addresses, but told her the story at full length, leaving out the kisses, which gratified the old virgin with being made a confidant.

At four o'clock—Genevieve dined early in summer for the sake of a walk in the evening,—at four o'clock the philosopher and the other guests arrived. Now we have looked into all our documents, hints, records, and memorandums, but cannot find what Genevieve had for dinner: this is very vexatious; however, we must content ourselves with knowing that she certainly had some dinner, because we find it said that, *after dinner*, Mrs. Kerry Tacklecrack (Kerry is a diminutive of Kerenhappuk) spake as follows:—"You have a very pretty cottage here, Miss De Roma."

"Yes, madam."

"You have furnished it and laid out the gardens with great taste and elegance."

"I am glad you think so, madam."

"Had you all your furniture from town?"

"Yes, madam."

"Were you your own architect?"

"Yes, madam."

"You have shown great taste in your choice of spot."

"So they say, madam."

“Yes, indeed, and with very great judgment, because I think so; I am a great critic in these matters, and have great experience in building, furnishing, planting, laying out land, and making water; but you have the lake just before you, so you need make no water, and that is a lucky thing; for there are situations and places when one cannot make water, if one would, to save one’s life, and no place can be pretty without water in it, or near it.”

“Very true, madam,” quoth Genevieve, “I love water vastly.”

“There are so many pretty spots here that, I think, you must be greatly puzzled which to choose; but you cannot see a bit of the castle from any other: here you get an elbow of it, an angle, and that determined you?”

“It did, madam.”

“Lawk-a-daisy, well, I thought so, if I did not I’ll be whipt.”

Upon which Genevieve and Madam Tacklecrack retired to the drawing-room, and left George Grove and the philosopher to drink a glass of wine together, and toast their sweethearts.—As soon as they got into the drawing-room, Madam Tacklecrack went off again:—

“So, you will be married next Saturday, Miss De Roma?”

“I shall, madam.”

“Lawk-a-daisy! O! well, I think I could never bring my mind to be married.”

“Why not, madam?”

“O, why, I can’t abide young children: and if I were to marry I should have fifty—do you mean to suckle? I dare say you will be able to do it.”

“Good heavens! madam—”

“Good heavens!—why, the men can’t hear us; we may talk over our own matters; surely, it is a woman’s duty to suckle, and if she does not suckle she will have no luck with her children: it is unnatural in a woman not to suckle; what’s her milk sent for? Not to be physicked away—I hope you mean to suckle, Miss De Roma.”

“Dear madam!”

“A woman can’t love her child, Miss De Roma, who will not suckle it; but what will you do with your husband, when you have got him, bring him here?”

“Yes, madam.”

“You have decked out your bridal chamber very prettily, I warrant; will you let me see it?”

“Yes, madam; these doors will pass you into it.”

“O you must come and explain things:—bless me, what a pretty bed! Dear me! These true-love-knots are very pretty, very pretty, indeed; well, on which side will you put your husband, hey? I dare say, now, you have it in mind on which side you will put him, hey? You must put him on your left side, and then he will lie next your heart.”

“My good madam!”

“Well, well, well, what a sweet pretty quilt!—What is this, what is this? the marriage of Cupid and Psyche upon it!—As I live you will not lie under all these blankets?—Well, I never saw a bride’s chamber so prettily furnished!—Well, but which is to be your husband’s dressing-room; he can’t dress before you, you know, that won’t be decent?”

“Here it is, madam.”

“Lawk-a-claisy-o, how sweet and pretty; but which is the bride’s closet?”

"This is my dressing-room on this side, madam, if you mean that."

"Blue and gold, vastly neat, indeed; but stay, I don't see any kisses about your bed; don't you know how to make kisses out of ribands?"

"No, indeed, madam; I never heard of such things."

"O dear, dear, dear—a bride's bed without any kisses!—I never knew such a thing; I will make you some kisses and send them to-morrow—here—they must hang, just here, a long festoon of them—bless my heart alive! I was sure I missed something!—Well, I will send you some, but you must be sure to tell your husband what there are, hey, Miss De Roma? You must promise me that, or I will not show you how to make any, I won't indeed: there are single kisses and double kisses; the single kisses must hang here, and then after the single kisses come the double kisses, and they must hang here; and then after them comes the tassel, that is a great bunch of kisses tied all together, and that must hang here, just here, over little Cupid's head, that is the right place for the tassel. Oh how sweet the roses and the mignonette smell here?—Dear me, Miss De Roma, well, you have a great deal of taste! What beautiful furniture! How elegantly disposed!"

"Madam, you do me excessive honour; but really, if you suppose these apartments were fitted for the purpose which you have hinted at, you make a mistake; indeed, there was not time; for it was this morning, no longer since, I assure you, when my lover and I fixed on our wedding-day."

"Fiddle faddle," said Madam Kerry, "I know better," and upon this they returned into the drawing-room.

“Oh dear me, oh dear me, oh dear me!” quoth Madam Tacklecrack, throwing her person upon a sofa, “I have been so troubled with the colic ever since I have been at Hindermark this time—so pinched—whether it come from drinking claret after dinner, or eating so much of their monstrous great windy brocoli—so teased with such a pushing and thrusting in my bowels, so plagued with such a maundering and wambling in my stomach, so disturbed and astonished with strange noises and squabbling in my intestines, such piping and singing, such quaverings, trillos, and sounds of music, that I dreamed last night, after eating a cabbage and a half for my supper, that I had the whole band of the Royal Horse Guards in my stomach!—Oh! then I waked in such a condition! in such a tempest of wind! Oh, Miss De Roma! is your good old woman at hand? Don’t ring the bell, for then your man will come; can I get at your old nurse? I hear a noise in the next room.”

“It is nurse,” said Genevieve, upon which she called the old woman.

“Nurse,” quoth Mrs. Kerry, “a thimble full of that noble cogniac which I tasted here the other day—just a thimble full.”

“I hope, madam, that cruel wind”—quoth nurse, and would have talked a little, if Madam Kerry had not interrupted her;—“yes, nurse, go and get the brandy, and we will talk about it afterwards;” upon which off went the old nurse as fast as her corns would let her go, and came into the drawing-room with a bottle of brandy in one hand, and a tumbler as big as a fire bucket in the other, which Old Comical, who got hold of the story, called Madam Kerry’s thimble ever after.

In the glass was a tablespoon, which made Madam Kerry start, "what's that spoon for, nurse?" said she.

"I thought, madam," quoth old nurse, "that it were a sup of brandy and water."

"Water! nurse," said the old maiden, "water!—no, nurse, I am too bad for that this afternoon; pour away, nurse, pour away, pour away; I say, pour away, pour away, bless me! cover the bowl of the spoon, nurse, pour away! O' my conscience, the woman has the cramp in her shoulder, pour away, I tell you, I can wait no longer; was there ever such a narrow-mouthed bottle in the world!—come, give me what you have squeezed out.—So: very good—this is proof: very good, indeed!—this is old Tom."

"Would you choose another little drop, madam?" said old nurse.

"Stand still, nurse; stand still: don't be in a hurry—stand still!—what d'ye think of that, nurse? There! again!—there! there! there! that last was the best of all—Now, nurse, won't you believe that I was troubled with the wind?"

"I'fackins, madam, I hope you are better!—An empty house, they say, is better than a bad tenant."

Genevieve threw herself flat upon her back upon a sofa, and laughed till her sides ached!

"Hold still, nurse; hold still:—now go and cover the bowl of the spoon—not one drop more—with boiling water—no, no, stay: leave the brandy-bottle by me; one can't tell what may happen while you are gone a mile for hot water," said Madam Kerenhappuk; "I may die of the colic before your poor old corns will bring you back again—there, set the bottle down there; that will do very well:—what a fine rich colour it has,"

said the old virgin, looking through the bottle; "I wish I may die," added she, with a hiccup, "but this same brandy is very good in flatulent cases. Upon my word, Miss De Roma, the colic is no laughing matter."

"I really beg ten thousand pardons, madam," said Genevieve; "but you have such a droll way with you that I think I could die of laughter."

Old nurse now returned with Madam Kerry's thimble, and a table-spoonful of hot water at the bottom of it; upon which Madam Kerry poured out all the rest of the brandy, and, giving old nurse the empty bottle, said, "that will do, at present, nurse; if I fall ill after this, hold another bottle ready at a moment's warning."

"Yes, madam," quoth old nurse, and was going, when Genevieve, who might well be glad of a little fresh air, told her to bid the footman carry the tea and coffee into the green-house, which was furnished like a sitting-room, and walled round with all sorts of sweet herbs, shrubs and flowers. Upon which Madam Kerry put the brandy and water where it ought to be, at least into the best place which she could find to put it in, videlicet, her stomach, when she and Genevieve walked into the green-house, and Genevieve was glad enough to leave the room, for it smelled like a brandy-shop. She was just going to ring the bell, when Madam Kerry stopped her hand.

"Come," said she, "you are in such a hurry to get your lover into the room; you shall not send for him yet; I must have a little talk with you, and first I must give you a little good advice: I know you are very fond of farming, but you must leave off working on your uncle's farm now you will be married, hoeing and reaping and scrambling about; it will be very improper,

not to say any worse of it, and your custom of throwing yourself into the water when you are hot must be left off too; it is always a very dangerous way, but you think you have a constitution to bear any thing; and you must be content to walk and leave that helter-skelter trick of running from place to place, and jumping every ditch that comes in your way; this is harum-scarum, and rantum-scantum: the strongest people are always in the most danger: lugging gates off the hooks, girthing your own horse, hauling garden tubs, pots, and boxes about, drawing of water, and the like toiling and moiling must be let alone; it must indeed: O' my conscience you will come five years before your time else!"

"I am extremely obliged and honoured by your good advice, madam," said Genevieve, "and take it as a proof of the friendship which you have so often expressed for me: to collect wisdom for the use of one's friends is to put one's pains to the best of all uses, for we cannot enter upon a new scene of life too well guarded against the dangers which may occur in it; and, to be told beforehand what they are, and how to provide against them is, of all others, the most valuable, as well as the most friendly piece of information; but now, if you please, we will take our tea and coffee, madam."

"One moment, one little bit of a moment," said Madam Tacklecrack, who would have talked until midnight, if George Grove and the philosopher had not come, uncalled, and followed the footman with the tea and coffee.

If a man were to go out a-hunting and find two women exactly alike and bring them home with him,

how folks would stare at them, and what a talk there would be over them!—and yet the wonder seems to lie all on the other side, videlicet, that among so many it should not be an every day matter.—Genevieve and Julia were certainly no wonder of this sort, for no two women could ever differ more, and yet be greater friends. They got a good deal together in the course of this week which was to make two brides of them before Sunday morning, to talk the important matter over; Julia was all love, fear, and bashfulness; Genevieve, gathering courage out of another's fears, seemed to think that she should stand her ground without fear and trembling: if a woman catches a man, or a rat, 'tis all one, she is afraid to meddle with either, for fear they should bite her fingers. It is wonderful to see how folks will laugh at fear when it is at a little distance, and how they get the fidgets when any terrible thing is at hand! Genevieve's joy was so immoderate that she would have played at leap-frog with Julia if she had a mind to the game; she was as mad as the moon could make her—if a man had taken the moon in both hands and squeezed all its juice into her brains she could not have been more mad for her heart. This comes of overrating things, setting greater store by them than they are worth; let people marry, as they may to their heart's content, marriage is no Paradise after all; there will be bitter herbs enough in the pot, and their being unexpectedly found in it will make the broth none the more savoury: Adzooks! folks thought that the philosopher must marry a woman without a skin at last, for a man might have sworn that Genevieve would have jumped out of hers before Saturday morning!—As for Acerbus he never moved a muscle.

Come, come, don't stand chattering here, come to the weddings!—Very well, courteous reader, we will carry you as fast as we can go—What the devil comes of so much spurring?—tumbles and bruises, broken bones not so easily mended—fiddle-faddle! to the weddings! —To pity the impatience of ladies and gentlemen who are doing us the honour to read this our history, we will now proceed to say, that after a week spent in due preparations and preliminaries the happy day arrived, and, as good luck would have it, it was one of the finest days that ever was seen in the world, so bright and so sunny that Old Crab read the marriage ceremony without putting his spectacles on!—As soon as it was over, Genevieve was in a great pucker to get out of sight, for, on some account, she did not like to be stared at, nor Julia either, so the two brides and the two bridegrooms took a walk together, that is, for we would not be misunderstood for the world, *all* together. Now the plan was laid out in due order by Madam Tacklecrack, that all the good folks should meet at the castle to dine, after which Genevieve and the philosopher might retire to her cottage if they pleased, and George and Julia steal away to the house built by Mr. Grove, and now ready for their reception, in the pretty meadow before mentioned.

Now, good reader! if we thought that by any extraordinary effort of imagination thou couldst form a conception of the joy of this said dinner at the castle, we would leave thee to picture to thyself this scene of mirth and ecstasy—but we do not think thou canst—and yet we cannot describe it—so must e'en leave it to thine imagination after all.

When the ladies retired after dinner to the drawing-

The History of Mr. John Decastro

room, Genevieve, for some unaccountable reason, left the party and was seen to walk down to the water-side, for that was all the intelligence that could be got—and was not afterwards to be found! Acerbus, who went out to look for her amongst others, saw her hat floating on the lake, which, taking a boat, he picked up at a great distance from the shore; this gave good reason to conclude that she must have fallen into the water and been drowned. Men and boats and nets were instantly employed to search for the body, but, although the search was continued for a week, it could not be found.

Acerbus, after erecting an elegant cenotaph in his uncle's church in honour and memory of poor Genevieve, retired to Oxford under a load of sorrow.

The disturbance and consternation which this melancholy event occasioned is, and must be, left to the conception of all such as read this history, for we think that it will not be expected at our hands to attempt any description of an indescribable thing. Poor Julia, though in the arms of the man whom she loved above the world, could find no pleasure there, but spent many days and nights in bitter lamentation for the loss of one whom she so much loved, and by whom she was loved so well. A more awful instance of the uncertainty of human happiness, perhaps, was seldom seen than this, or one for which the minds of all whom it concerned were less prepared. But having much on our hands, we must leave it to the reader to moralize as may best suit his humour or inclination, and pass on to another strange event which took place soon after the above.

Amongst other relations who came to these weddings was Sir John Lamsbroke, Harry's father, who married

one of Mr. Decastro's sisters, a man of great fortune, fashion and vices. Not having any better employment, he cast an evil eye on the beautiful Julia, and laid a plot for her destruction. He concealed under smiles, and much sunshine of face, a deep grudge which he owed Old Crab, her father, with whom, it may be remembered, he had had a severe quarrel in the affairs of Lord Budemere. He held out reconciliation, however, in order to take a deeper revenge as opportunities might offer, and which he could not so well avail himself of if he held off in anger for what was past. Seeing Julia, amongst others, more especially overwhelmed with grief upon the late melancholy event, he invited her and George Grove and Mrs. B. Decastro to Lamsbroke park, insinuating the advantages which a change of scene might give to minds oppressed with sorrows. Old Crab demurred a good deal upon the matter, but when he found that Julia's husband was to be of the party, and, to add weight to the invitation, that Lady Lamsbroke, who was in a very bad state of health, wished exceedingly to see her niece and give her her blessing upon her marriage, as she thought she had but a little time to live, he at last consented, and the party set off together in Sir John Lamsbroke's travelling carriage for Lamsbroke park, which was about fifty miles distant from Oaken Grove.

In the middle of their journey they stopped at an inn in a little town to dine; as soon as dinner was over George Grove and Mrs. B. Decastro fell fast asleep in their chairs, and Sir John said to Julia, "Mrs. George, we will, if you please, talk a little walk in the town, and when we return these good folks will have had their nap,—and be ready to proceed." But Julia, so

cautioned by her father, made her excuses, and would by no means trust herself alone with her uncle. He made light of it, however, and said, "well, I will walk out by myself, and return presently." It was now getting dark, and Julia, a little surprised at her uncle's stay, and the long sleep of her mother and husband, attempted to awaken first one and then the other, but in vain! It now grew darker, and while Julia was trying to rouse George Grove, four men came into the room with crape upon their faces, and forced her away, calling and screaming to her husband for help to no purpose.

CHAPTER VII

What becomes of Julia—A strange thing befalls Old Comical—
The consequences thereof.—*Old Comical at work again.*

OLD CRAB had despatched Old Comical with orders to see a lot of fat oxen delivered safe into the hands of a drover; which, having done, and returning through a wood, Old Comical was alarmed with a clap of thunder, sure sign that a storm was a-brewing. Honest John, who always thought a dry coat was better than a wet jacket, tacked his horse about and returned to an inn which he had just passed in the wood which was the only house within ten miles of him. He rode up to the door and asked for supper and a bed, pulling out the frill of his shirt to show the landlord his clean linen. Whereupon the landlord called him "Sir," and said he might have supper, but all his beds were engaged as he was in expectation of much company. Old Comical rode into the yard, put his horse into a warm stable, and, after seeing him well fed and rubbed, walked into the house to take care of himself.

"Major Domo," quoth Old Comical, "I will lie here to-night if I lie with my horse!"—for it rained and thundered very much at that time.

The landlord said that there would neither be room for him nor his horse, for all his stables as well as his beds were engaged, and moreover he must make the best use of his time to eat his supper, for he could not

stay there another hour. Old Comical, who had seen the world and something in it before to-day, picked a suspicion out of the landlord's manner that made him a little curious. "Look ye," quoth Old Comical, "give me a bed, or I will sit up and see what guests you expect here in the middle of the night, old boy, depend upon it." The landlord looked perplexed, and very much like a man who was not best friends with his conscience; calling his wife aside, after a little talk with her he came back presently, and said to Old Comical, "Sir, if you are not afraid to sleep at a distance from the rest of the house we can make a bed for you in a room over the stables, you may go to it up these stairs through a passage."

"Shew me a room with a good bed in it," quoth Old Comical, "and leave the rest to me," and thereupon sat down to some fried eggs and bacon and a quart of strong beer well seasoned with nutmeg and a toast. While Old Comical was eating his supper, he observed much ado in the house with airing of beds, and great fuss and preparation for the company which mine host expected that night at his house. As soon as he had supped, and indeed his landlord thought he never would come to an end of eating and drinking, the inn-keeper and his wife seemed a little too anxious to get him to bed not to raise Old Comical's curiosity, who called for a pipe and a basin of half-and-half by way of grace-plate after supper.

"Old Cock-a-doodle," quoth Old Comical to mine host, "this is rare tackle," pointing to his liquor; "come, bring a glass and taste thine own," whereupon he lighted his pipe, and blew a sheet of smoke over the landlord's shoulders.

The landlord, however, pleaded hurry and expectation of guests in excuse, and said, he wished at that time for his room rather than his company. Old Comical finished his pipe and his punch, oiled his boots, called for a candle, went to bed, and presently to sleep, notwithstanding thunder, lightning, wind and rain, in addition to no little curiosity to know who was coming that night to the house, and what mighty reason there could be for getting him out of the way. When a man goes to bed tired it is not the tinkling of a purling stream that will keep him awake, and though Old Comical got into bed with his breeches and stockings on, meaning to steal down stairs presently and take a look at those guests which had made such a bustle in the house, he fell fast asleep and slept soundly from nine o'clock until one in the morning, when he was awakened by a carriage driven furiously to the house attended by some on horseback.

Old Comical jumped out of bed, and, creeping to the window, opened the casement with as little noise as possible, and held an ear out of window; all on a sudden he heard some woman scream with all her might and call for help, and, what astonished him the more, he thought he knew the voice! Upon this he dressed himself as fast as he could get his clothes on, some of which were not readily found in the dark, and, if it had not been for a great flash of lightning he never would have found his wig. Gently opening his room door, he stole down a staircase which led into a long passage where a large screen was placed, behind which he lay by to watch for further intelligence. He had locked his room door, however, prudently enough, before he left it, lest another should get possession of his bed,

and he thought he might as well return to it again as pass the remainder of the night in a cold passage, which was one of those wise reflections not at all unusual with Old Comical.

He had not been many minutes behind the screen before he heard the feet of several on the stairs, upon which he cut a hole in the screen with his knife, and put his eye to it to see what was to be seen. Presently he saw four men with crape upon their faces bring some lady by main force, for she struggled violently, and screamed as loud as a handkerchief bound over her face would permit her, attended by two women with candles in their hands, and carry her into a bed-room opposite to the screen behind which he stood, when coming near him, he got a view of the lady's face, and saw with no small surprise that she was Julia! In the room Old Comical saw a bed which was opposite to the door. Upon this bed the four men put Julia, who was at that time quiet enough, for she had fainted away; there they left her in charge of the two women, and came out of the room.

In a little time the two women came out also, and one said, "that fainting fit came just in good time, we should have had trouble enough to put her to bed else." Old Comical put his eye to the hole in the screen and saw one of the women bring away Julia's clothes, and shut the room door. Now all was dark in the passage when Old Comical heard one speak these words: "What is this man?"

The voice that answered he knew to be the landlord's. "Please your honour, he is some farmer, or drover, for he talked about oxen."

"Where is he?"

“Far enough out of our way; we put him to bed in a room which is over the stables.”

“The devil take this fellow—it will not do here—she must be carried further,” said the voice.

“I can lock the man up, if that be all,” said the landlord; “for we have a door in the passage to his room, and bring you the key.”

“Let it be done,” said the voice.

Old Comical heard one go and lock some door in the passage near his room and return. All now was silent: upon which Old Comical came from the screen, and poking his way in the dark got hold of the lock of the room door opposite to it and opening it, felt his way to the bed whereon he had seen the four men put Julia, and grabbing about it with his hands, soon found her in it. She was at this time recovering from her fit and began to stir, when Old Comical put his mouth and nose close to her ear and said, “it is I, madam, it is John Mathers come to take you out of harm’s way.”

Poor Julia knew his voice in a moment, and cried out, “O John, save me! save me!”—and immediately fell into another fainting fit; whereupon Old Comical gathered Julia up in the bedclothes, which he wrapped, sheets and blankets and quilt, well about her body, and being a sturdy fellow, took her up in his arms and contrived to get out of the room with her into the passage after some few rubs against the walls.

At that moment a foot was heard as of one coming up a stair-case, and the flashings of a distant light just served to show Old Comical his screen in time, behind which he carried Julia, and stood beating his brains for what had best be done.

Presently two came into the passage and walked

up to the screen, and one said, "Which is the room?" Some woman answered,

"That is the door with a key in it, sir."

"Is all quiet in the house?" said the other. The woman said all were gone to bed.

"Do the same," said the first, "and leave me."

Old Comical did his best to get a sight of these talkers, but they did not stand within the field of his eyelet-hole. One, however, went away. Old Comical, who wanted to get a sight of the man that stood waiting in the passage, as it seemed, till the woman was gone, put Julia upon the ground behind the screen, and begged of her to be still, for she was come to herself again, when the man, whoever he was, opened the room door to which he was directed by the woman, and went into it. Old Comical at that moment slipped out of his hiding place, locked the door upon him, and putting the key in his pocket, took up Julia wrapped up as she was in the bed-clothes, and carried her down stairs in the dark.

Now when a man wants to get out of a house the first thing he searches for is the door, and Old Comical presently found one, but he might as well have run his head against a wall, for it was locked and the key taken away. This was unlucky, for he knew he had no time to lose; he could not expect the man whom he had locked up in the bedroom would long rest contented, for he had asked Julia a few questions, and though he guessed at his intentions he had now no occasion for any further guesses. Old Comical, finding this door locked, very wisely said nothing to it, though some perhaps in his situation would have made it a long speech, called it names, as cruel, inhuman door, and the

like; but he, more prudently, turned away from it, and groped out his way into a room and found a window. But if the door was locked the window was as cruelly barred with great iron bars, as he soon found to his no little discomfiture, so all he got for his pains was a mouthful of fresh air when he pushed up the sash, which, by the way, was a great refreshment to poor Julia.

Old Comical now began to find himself in a very comical situation, and how long he had to live he did not know, but guessed his time would be short if he were taken in the act of stealing a woman and the goods upon him; though he had quite as much right to her as they who had stolen her before him. At one time he thought about fighting, but he had no weapons but his fists, and what was one pair of fists against four or five men whom he knew to be on all hands of him? He had much ado to keep Julia quiet, who was frightened almost out of her senses, and would not be left a moment, or, putting her down, he might have searched a good deal better for some hole to have crept out at; but wheresoever he went he was forced to carry Julia along with him in his arms, for, swathed up as she was in sheets and blankets, she could not use her legs. In cases like these fear is sure to come to add to a man's troubles, and what was still worse, he had Julia's fears to contend with as well as his own.

"The devil take the house," quoth Old Comical, as he staggered along some passage which led to the kitchen, where seeing a little glimmering light at a little distance, he stopt to listen, but heard nothing. Noise is a very terrible thing in a dark house, but as good luck would have it, none was heard; so he proceeded, and, by the smell of fried bacon, found he was

not far off the kitchen. In he went, and found that a few bright coals in the bottom of the grate had given the small light which he had seen. It is wonderful how much courage a little light will give a man in certain cases. Old Comical took heart at the sight of it, for having been so long in the dark it served him to see a great deal, and amongst other things the door which opened out of the kitchen into the yard, but though it showed him a door, it showed him at the same time that it was locked, like the other, and the key taken out of it! Over this door hung a great bell, which Old Comical very well knew to be one of the means to open a house if it were put to its right uses, and he never remembered to have been in such an opening humour in his life. Silence having so far stood him in but little stead, he took it into his head to try what noise would do for him. Now it came to pass that the fire gave a little blaze from a piece of wood coming in contact with the living coals, and showed Old Comical a large pair of nankeen breeches, which were hung over the back of a chair to dry. He took a pair of tongs, and holding the said small clothes close to the flame set them on fire, and, running away with the blazing breeches to the stairs' foot, called out fire as loud as he could bawl for his heart. Julia, whom he had left upon a chair in the kitchen, screamed as loud as she could, and gave furtherance to Old Comical's plan by adding to the uproar. Running back into the kitchen, and taking a long spit, he rang the bell which hung over the door with all his might.

The cry of fire, the screaming of Julia, the ringing of the great bell, and the smell of the burning small clothes, soon raised the whole house. Down came the

landlord, and down came his wife, down came the chamber-maid, scullion, and cook, naked as they were, for of all nights in the world this they thought the most unfit for them to die in; four or five others, spurred by an evil conscience, came tumbling down stairs after them; for in these hasty cases if one foot slips, which was the case here, down come all above—down they came, and all in the dark, for the breeches, which Old Comical had flung blazing on the stairs, had now burned out, and midnight took again its turn to reign!

All the doors in the house were presently opened, and Old Comical, who had slipped into a little parlour with Julia in his arms, now made a push, and ran out with her into the wood, which grew on all sides of the house. Setting her down upon some moss at the foot of some great tree, he fell a-laughing till he dropped down upon the ground.

Now the situation of the good folks in and about the house was whimsical enough, they were all in a puzzle, all naked and all in the dark. By whom they had been alarmed they could not tell, nor what part of the house were on fire could any see, but they all thought the devil was come to fetch them. When Old Comical had got the better of his fit of laughter, whose merry chuckle did Julia more good than any foolish thing put to her nose, in the form of salts, hartshorn, or burnt feathers, the next thing he wanted was his horse, but how to come at him was a little perplexity.

If Julia would have sat quiet a little Old Comical would not have wanted address to have brought his horse off and himself too, but his wit was wanted nearer home, for he, at that instant, heard a rustling amongst

the boughs, when some man, who saw a white figure at the foot of the tree, called out "Here she is!" speaking, as it seemed, to others who were within hearing. Old Comical leaped up, for he was sitting near and comforting Julia, struck the man on the face with all his might, and laid him at one blow at his feet; then, catching up Julia in his arms, he carried her further into the wood. The sky clearing a little at that time, he made a little double, and came round into the turn-pike road, when, hearing wheels at a distance, as luck would further have it, a returned post-chaise came up, into which Old Comical put poor Julia, and bade the post-boy make the best of his way to the next town, for he had got one sick in a blanket that had met with an accident, and wanted help. By the time the post-boy had driven about two hundred yards, Old Comical called to him to pull up, and draw the chaise behind some bushes, which so well concealed it from the road that all the world might pass by day and not suspect a carriage to be there.

Julia, with some difficulty, had been prevailed upon to let Old Comical go back and fetch his horse, in which there seemed the less danger as none could tell what he had done, and if the worst came she had now the means of getting off. Old Comical certainly had no mind to lose a good horse and a new saddle and bridle, which had brought him down upon the nail for ninety-five pounds and four shillings, whereupon to go a-courting to Madam Funstall of Dillies Piddle, for Old Comical, it may be called to mind, could do great things now, being lord of the manor of Cock-a-doodle; we say he had certainly no mind to lose his horse—but he had a farther view in returning to the house, he had a mind

to try if any intelligence was to be got as to who, and what they were, who had forced Julia away from her friends. Coming back to the inn, which he could scarce see, for the night was very dark, and the sky full of the blackest clouds, he found all as still as death, and as to getting into the house there was no difficulty at all in that, for the doors were all wide open. It seemed as if all were gone to bed again, and left the doors open to air the house; upon which Old Comical, who had a voice as loud as any three men you could find in the market, began to call out for the ostler, and for his horse and threatened to pull the stables down; out of which, after a great deal of calling came a voice, but it sounded more like a groan than an answer.

Old Comical, however, made up to it, and, after three or four tumbles upon the dunghills, by which he got nothing but dirt,—what should he, when he fell so soft?—he found the stable door which he opened, one thing a door is made for, the other thing being to shut—but let that pass—it is the business of the historian, however, to instruct, as well as to amuse his reader as he goes along—but let that pass too—“Ostler,” quoth Old Comical, “what the devil is come to this place to-night? bring out my horse, I’ll stay no longer, bring out my horse, I say, or I’ll bring you out by your ears!”

“Sir,” quoth the ostler, “you have hit it—the devil, and he has been long expected here, is come to this place to-night—he has been just seen by my master, and they are all run away and left me to go to hell by myself! they drive such a trade here that I wonder the house has not been swallowed up by an earthquake—

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a pack of them have brought a lady into it to-night, and now they have ravished and murdered her they are surprised at seeing the devil, and who should they look for next?"

"Who brought her?" quoth Old Comical.

"Why," quoth he, "'tis some lord or baronet, I can't hit on his name, and that is no wonder neither, for I never heard it, but somebody that came with him called him Sir Somebody Something, and that I'll swear, though I know the devil is within ten yards of me at this moment, for I heard him hiss when you called, sir."

"Is nobody in the house?" quoth Old Comical.

"Not a soul, sir—we all ran out together, and I had gone with the rest, if I had not tumbled into the horse pond."

And the ostler spoke the truth, for Old Comical, notwithstanding he groped his way into the house again, and searched and called till he was tired, could find no soul in it. When he came back to the stables, he found the ostler standing with his horse ready saddled and bridled, which he immediately mounted, and, what was very uncommon with old Comical, rode off without paying his bill. He had now, however, as good a reason for so doing as ever he had in his life, for there was nobody to take his money, except the ostler, whom he could not persuade to take even the money for his horse, alleging that every thing that belonged to the landlord belonged to the devil, and, as the devil might bring him to account for it, he did not care to meddle with the money. So Old Comical came off *scot free*, but with no other intelligence than that some lord or baronet had carried Julia to this place; that the name of the innkeeper was James Watkins,

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and the sign of the inn was the Nag's-head. When he returned to the chaise he found poor Julia in a peck of troubles at his staying so long, and nothing could satisfy her but his tying his nag to the chaise horses, and getting into the chaise.

CHAPTER VIII

Further accounts of Julia—More comical Tricks of Old Comical.

OLD COMICAL, not finding any body in the inn, and for this reason, amongst others, because there was nobody in it, returned, as we were saying, to Julia, and got into the chaise by her particular desire, thinking, as it appears, that the nearer she was to Old Comical the better. This shows, reader, how a woman will stick to a man at times. Old Comical, having now a little leisure, and little else to do, began to ask Julia a world of questions about her coming to the inn in the night, and with people who seemed to have no very good intentions. Julia, poking her nose a little way out of the blanket, spake as followeth:

“I have already told you, John,” said she, “that I was dragged out of a room at an inn by four men in masks where my mother and my husband were sitting—”

“Sitting!” quoth Old Comical, “why they did not sit still and look on, did they?”

“They certainly did not look on,” said she, “for their eyes were shut and they fast asleep.”

“What!—asleep!” quoth he, “why did you not waken them?”

“I could not do it,” said she, “and there was the wonder, for I had been pulling them and calling to them for some time before these men came in our room, and

could no more waken them than I could raise the dead ! when some held me fast while others tied handkerchiefs over my eyes and mouth, and then I was pulled away and put into some carriage."

"But what happened when these rascals got you into the carriage? no harm, I hope," quoth he.

"None other, John, than binding my hands, and holding me fast,—except, going at a great rate, some part of the carriage was broken, and we were stopped a long while on the road before it was made fit to go on with us; while this repair was making, I was threatened to be instantly shot if I struggled or made the least noise. It was promised me that no harm should happen to me if I was quiet. After some time we went on again; before we stopped at that frightful inn, some other man got into the carriage, for it rained, who smelt very sweet of essence of roses; I have great reason to think that it was my uncle Lamsbroke, for he smelt so much of essence of roses when in the carriage with us, that the smell made my mother's head ache, and she put a window of the coach down. Well, as soon as this person got into the carriage the horrid part of the thing began, which was none other than a dispute which of them should come into my room first as soon as I was put to bed in the inn! One of the men, and I think it was he who smelled so much of roses, spoke in a feigned voice:—the dispute growing serious, one proposed drawing lots for me as soon as they came to the inn, and this put an end to the altercation. O John! no soul can conceive what I have suffered! I did not faint away, however, before you saw me forced into the room opposite to the screen—you know the rest."

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“Yes, madam,” quoth Old Comical, “and as sure as ever one man’s neck, whom I could name, deserves an halter more than another’s, Sir John Lamsbroke is the man that managed this business.”

It now began to dawn, and Julia was in a sad pucker about her person, for what with her anxiety upon her husband’s and her mother’s account, who were like to go distracted when they awoke and missed her, and came to a knowledge of what had happened, which she thought, of course, they could not fail of obtaining from some, who must have heard her cries, and witnessed the transaction. For, though she was blind-folded at her first seizure, she had an idea that some attempt was made to rescue her. What with these feelings, and the great joy of her fortunate deliverance, she had almost forgot that she was without any clothes except her chemise. She had, however, a blanket and one of the sheets, the rest of the bed-clothes being lost in the wood, but they were so ill disposed about her that she was afraid, when day-light came, Old Comical as well as others, would see more of her person than came to their share. Of this she could not help expressing her fears, and began routing about in the chaise to get better covered, and make the most of the sheet and the blanket, complaining, moreover, of being cold.

This put Old Comical to his wits again, which rarely failed him at a pinch, and he stopped the chaise; when he got out of it, and telling Julia to pull up all the blinds and put herself right in the middle of the blanket, leaving it to him to put the sheet about her over all, he drew his knife and cut a dozen long skewers out of a hedge. Now, at the word of command, re-entering

the chaise, after Julia had made a whimsical use of the straw, which lay very thick at the bottom of it, and put her person right into the middle of the blanket, he took the sheet, and wrapping her well up in it, skewered her into it at all corners, save one at her head, just as a butcher would skewer up a pig's body in a cloth, after he had stuck it and scalded the hair off; a thing which Old Comical had often done for Madam Funstall, when he had stuck a pig at Dillies Piddle. Julia now felt warm and comfortable, and, being much exhausted, fell asleep in her corner of the chaise: after which only one thing happened of considerable moment before they came to the next town, to which the post-chaise was on its return when Julia was put into it, and that was, old Comical changed his quid of tobacco.

Now this town lay in the way to that from which Julia had been carried by force, and Old Comical would have bargained to take the same chaise on to prevent the necessity of taking Julia out, and finding an excuse for such an odd piece of luggage, which was skewered up in the manner aforesaid; but as the horses only belonged to the inn-keeper where the chaise stopped, and the chaise to another, a change of chaise and luggage was found by Old Comical to be quite unavoidable. It was now day, the door of the chaise was opened and Old Comical alighted first, when a porter came, officiously enough, to take out the gentleman's luggage.

"What do you charge for standing out of the way," quoth Old Comical, shouldering the porter into the kennel, "you must go to my lord if you needs must be paid a shilling a step, which you will not get from me unless I was sure that the next step you took would carry you to the gallows!—stand out of the way!"

Saying which, Old Comical skewered up the mouth of the sheet and blanket over Julia's head, which had been left open for air, and taking her carefully in his arms, carried her into the house and begged for leave to put her into the larder.

"What have you got there, farmer?" quoth the landlord.

"A porker," quoth Old Comical.

"It is a very large one," said the landlord.

"It weighs ten score," quoth Old Comical.

"Why," said the post-boy, who stood by, with a grin, "you told me you had got a sick man in the cloth, when you got into the chaise, master."

"You grinning fool," quoth Old Comical, "if I had said I had a piece of meat in it, it were odds you had refused me a place in the chaise, and left me out in the rain."

"I wish I may be hanged if I did not think I heard you and the pig talking together as I came along," quoth the post-boy.

"That's no wonder," quoth Old Comical, "for I talked to it almost all the way we came, asked it how it felt itself in the hot water when its hair was scalded off its back and belly, and how it liked to be stuck?"

If Old Comical had gone on a little longer Julia would have fell a laughing upon the shelf of the larder, and frightened the folks out of their wits: and it was as much as Old Comical could do to prevent one or another pulling out the skewers to take a look at his pig.

The chaise, however, which he ordered, was now ready, and Old Comical, taking a vast luncheon of bread and cheese, and two bottles of strong beer into

the carriage with him, after having, with great care, placed Julia in one corner, paid the post-boy well who brought them to this place, and away he went shaking his sides with laughter, in which Julia could not help joining for her heart.

But, however Old Comical might carry this matter, suspicion fell upon him at the inn, and first from the post-boy who drove him to it, who told his master that he was sure all was not right; that when he passed the Nag's-head in the night there was a strange disturbance, and screaming of women in it. It had always been a house of ill repute, and he had seldom gone by it, especially in the night, without hearing ill words and quarrels there; but he verily thought the people were all mad when he came by it this time, for, by the help of a flash of lightning, he saw men and women running about naked in the road, some calling help, some fire, and some murder. He flogged his horses on with all speed, for he thought it might be as well for him not to stop there and come in for a share in the hanging. The post-boy added, that he had not got above two hundred yards on his way beyond the house before a man ran up to the heads of his horses, and called to him to stop. He told him it was a returned chaise and nobody in it but the driver, who had not half-a-crown in his pocket. It was no robbing business, it was answered—there was a sick man wrapped in a cloth, and places were wanted in the chaise—and though the man might not be dead then, it was his firm belief that he had died on the road, and that, perhaps of wounds he had received in some quarrel at Watkins's house.

“No, no, master,” subjoined the post-boy, “it was

no pig that was skewered up in that cloth, but a murdered man, depend upon it."

"O' my conscience," said the landlady, "I thought the pig had the longest hind legs of any porker I ever saw—I'm sure it was a man's body in the cloth, and—" she was in such a talking humour that she would have talked at least for an hour, if one, who had heard the post-boy's story, had not come in, in a violent hurry, and said that there was blood in the chaise!—Now certainly this blood might have come from a dead pig, and no murder committed any further than the sticking of a porker came to; but see how folks run away with things; all posted away to the chaise, and blood, it is true, was seen smeared upon the lining of it, and the straw very wet at the bottom too, which might come from some dreadful unknown cause. These things together made up a horrid mystery; as for the blood it had flowed from Old Comical's knuckles, who had cut his hand when he knocked the man down in the wood; and as for the wet straw the cause thereof must be left to the reader's sagacity.

This story ran like wildfire, the town was in a great perspiration in five minutes, seven and twenty women were turned into warm water, and a ghost was seen walking out of the church-yard! Magistrates were consulted, constables sent for, seven and forty horses were saddled, and a pursuit of Old Comical immediately set on foot. But Old Comical well knew the ways of the world—he had too keen a nose not to smell suspicion at the inn before any dog of the best scent there.

"Driver," said he at the door, loud enough for a man to hear him a mile, "go to such a place." "Driver," quoth Old Comical again, as soon as he got out of the

town, "tack about, and go directly the contrary way." Now when Old Comical heard what a galloping there was after him upon the very road which he never went, he flung himself upon the ground, as his custom was, and laughed till he was out of breath!

Now it came to pass after a few hours spent upon the road, and Julia, for the first time in her life, had eaten bread and cheese, and drank strong beer for her breakfast, they came to the inn where she had been snatched up the day before and carried by others where she had no mind to go herself. Before they arrived at the door of the inn, to which Old Comical had been directed by Julia, he skewered her up in her sheet, as before, over head and ears, and, taking a pocket ink-horn out of his pocket, writ a direction upon her in capital letters, as follows, videlicet:

FOR GEORGE GROVE, ESQ.,
CROWN INN.

Carriage, 10s. 6d.

With care.

"Waiter," quoth Old Comical, when they stopped at the inn, "is one Mr. Grove in this house?"

"There is a gentleman of that name here, but he went to bed a little indisposed, and is not yet risen. What is your business with him?"

"I have a small parcel for him," quoth Old Comical, pointing to Julia, as he alighted from the chaise, who was laid upon the seat of it with the directions in sight, and well it might be, for the letters were as large as the direction upon a broad wheeled waggon.

"A small parcel," said the waiter, grinning at the huge direction, "a small parcel!"

“You fool,” quoth Old Comical, “show me the way to the gentleman’s bed-room; I am charged to deliver the parcel into his own hands, for some careless rascal or other might put it into his pocket and forget to deliver it; show me the gentleman’s bed-room I say, what d’ye stand grinning there for?—why the fool must have come into the world grinning through a horse collar! get along first and show me the room.”

Upon which Old Comical carried Julia in his arms up a stair-case, and knocking at a door to which the waiter pointed, upon the word of command he entered it with his parcel.

“What d’ye want?” said George Grove, without seeing Old Comical, for the bed curtains were drawn round him.

“I have brought a little parcel for you, sir,” quoth he, in a feigned voice.

“Put it upon the table,” said George.

“Ten-and-sixpence to pay for it, sir, and what you please for the porter.”

“Very well,” said George, “tell the waiter to pay for it, and give you a shilling for yourself.”

“Thank your noble honour,” quoth Old Comical, and left the room. Not expecting any parcel, and a little surprised at the charge upon it, George poked his head out to take a look at it, when he saw a great long thing lying on the ground skewered up in a white cloth.”

Julia, finding herself alone with her husband could hold no longer, but cried out, “Come and unpin me, O my dearest husband!”

Upon hearing the parcel speak, George jumped out of bed, and began pulling out the skewers which pinned up Julia, and upon opening the sheet and the blanket

found with great astonishment his wife as naked as a worm in the middle of them!—Upon which he caught her in his arms, and carried her to his bed, and after a flood of tears, and some kisses of joy, she told him a story which, if it did not astonish him, reader, he must have been made of other matter than ourselves. But it is fit that we leave Julia and her husband together to satisfy one another in all matters relating to this strange event, and give some account of the odd way in which the people of the inn found Mrs. B. Decastro and George Grove after Julia was packed off.

The landlord, not satisfied, perhaps, with finding the bell belonging to their room so very quiet, in expectation it is like to have tea and coffee called for, sent in a waiter to look a little into matters, and ask what their stomachs served for? when the waiter, upon his coming into the room, found both Julia's mother, and her husband, lying at their full length on the carpet!—and, to all appearance, dead! He ran immediately out of the room, for fear of their ghosts, and told his master and his mistress what a sight he had seen. Now when people are dead it is high time to send for the doctor to fetch them to life again. One came and upon due examination of the bodies found life in both, but shut up in a deep sleep. After having tried the old fashioned ways of pulling of noses and pinching of fingers, &c., in vain, he looked at some who stood by and said, they were two lost cases: however, he would go to his shop and return a little better prepared to deal with them: which he did, and, after a great deal of trouble and some hours, he prevailed upon Mrs. B. Decastro to open her eyes and ask for a little small beer. After being treated in a way which the doctor thought proper,

she was put to bed in a half senseless state, or, it may be supposed that she would have called for something better than small beer. Poor George had like to have awakened in another world, for do what the doctor could, he was not, as it seemed, to be awakened in this: but, as good luck would have it, after a long pull and a strong pull between sleep and the doctor, he so managed matters as to pull George's eyes open once more! Mrs. Decastro put to bed! surely this could never be right—hold your hand a little reader,—she was put to bed, but the doctor followed her up and routed the old lady about in such a terrible manner that if she had swallowed a barrel of poppy-juice, poppies and all, she might have gone to the devil, but she never could have gone to sleep.

Now the doctor having brought his two patients to their senses, and put them in a sure way to keep them, began to make inquiries into their diet at the inn, for he said they had both been laid under the power of a strong opiate. He proceeded to ask if any part of their dinner remained, and if any liquors of which they had partaken could be brought him, the landlord answered that everything which came out of their room had been consumed in the house. Not satisfied with this he returned to the room wherein they had dined, and began to look on the side-tables for the wine glasses and decanters, mugs and other things, but everything had been carefully cleaned and put in its place: when, casting his eyes by accident on the carpet, he saw a little phial lie, and, taking it up, found that it contained a few drops of laudanum at the bottom.

“Aye,” quoth the doctor, “see what comes of folks

dosing themselves, and not calling in one of us to teach them the proper use and quantities of medicines.”

He immediately returned to Mrs. Decastro's room, and was soon undeceived as to any self-dosing in the matter; for both she, and George Grove, declared that they had taken no medicine at all. Upon which the doctor, finding his patients might be safely left, went out of the house in a great puzzle, and said he would call again in the course of a few hours.

But how came they not to miss Julia? that will be answered, reader, but whether to your satisfaction we must leave to another. Julia was the first thing that George Grove asked for, and the second thing which her mother did, for, as it hath been recorded, the first thing she inquired for was small beer. Upon which inquiry, that is for Julia, a note was given to Mrs. Decastro which contained the following words:

TO MRS. B. DECASTRO.

DEAR MADAM,

I send this note to inform you and Mr. Grove, that, as the evening is like to be very stormy, I am come to a resolution to put off our journey until to-morrow. You will find us at my good cousin's, Mr. Pitman's, about a mile out of town, where we are expecting you and Mr. Grove; come to us as soon as you can.

Upon this, Mrs. B. Decastro and George Grove would have gone there, but, as the house of Mr. Pitman was at a mile's distance out of the town, the doctor objected to their leaving the inn that night, whose objections were not like to be much opposed by any in their situation. George indeed felt a little uneasy at

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Julia's absence, but had not a guess at what had happened, and as for Mrs. B. Decastro, she believed every word of Sir John Lamsbroke's note as much as if she had read it in the Bible. Thus stood matters when Old Comical came in with poor Julia, who, as soon as he had put the wife, where she should be, into her husband's bed-room, walked into the kitchen to ask what news were stirring in the town?

"Nothing new had happened," the landlord said, of late.

"No!" quoth Old Comical, "what sort of a house do you keep, Old Boniface, for it to be no new thing to have a lady carried neck and heels out of it by main force, screaming as if she would be murdered?"

Upon which one of the fair sex standing by called him a lying rascal, and would have crammed a rag-mop, which she held, into his mouth, if Old Comical had not parried the weapon before it touched his countenance. He then asked the landlord if he knew any thing of the matter? who said there must be some mistake, for no such thing, that he knew of, had happened in his house. Upon this the landlady, who had heard what was said, roared out, "You had best blast our house, you lobster-faced scoundrel, hah?"

Old Comical saw which way the waters ran in a moment, and calmly replied, "Well, well, a man may pick up a lie and no great harm done, I hope there's no offence, I hope there's no offence, your sign is as clean as a penny, your sign is as clean as a penny."

"Clean! aye," quoth the landlady, "I should be glad to see the blackguard that dared to throw a bit of dirt upon it as big as a sixpence, scorch my four quarters if I would not spoil the dog for the sign of a man! ladies

forced out of our house, indeed! and we stand by and look on!—Scorch my arteries if I would not stick a spit into the first villain's body that said such a thing here!"

"Come, come," quoth Old Comical, "let's have no more of this—bring us a bowl of half-and-half and put a toasted orange into it stuck with cloves and cinnamon—come, come, let's have no more of this—pipes and tobacco, some sawdust and a spitting kettle—let's have no more of this—let's have no more of this—no intention to set your petticoats on fire, my good lady hostess, no, no intention to set your petticoats on fire—mix the good stuff, mix the good stuff, let's have no more of this."

"You are a little too hard upon the gentleman, Peg," quoth the landlord, and that shut her up. Old Comical held a bee in his bonnet, however, and had very little doubt which to believe, the landlord, the landlady, or Julia.

Now it came to pass as he was sitting with all his tackle about him at the kitchen fire, in came the doctor who had attended Mrs. B. Decastro and George Grove. Old Comical knew his colour in a moment by an ivory pipe that stuck out of his breeches' pocket, and asked him to toast his nose, and take a glass of bead-proof with him. The doctor, upon this, cocked his organ, and took a glass of punch with Old Comical. After a puff or two, Old Comical and the doctor measured snouts together, and the doctor told his errand at the inn, but Old Comical smoked away and said very little. Presently the doctor observed that it was time to visit his patients, and knocking the ashes out of his pipe, thanked Old Comical for his polite invitation and went up a staircase.

He was scarce gone when Sir John Lamsbroke walked into the kitchen with his head bound in a handkerchief, and, seeing Old Comical, "So, Master Mathers," he said "what brought you here?"

Old Comical stared with some little wonder at the sight of him, and said, his master's business brought him there.

"You seem surprised," said Sir John, "at seeing my head bound, but we have had Julia taken from us by force by some ruffians, and I received a severe wound in my attempts to rescue her. Four fellows came upon us as we were walking in the town, in the dusk of the evening, forced her into a carriage and ran off with her; I instantly seized a horse that stood ready saddled at a door, and rode after them as fast as I could, overtook them, and attacked them single handed, but was soon knocked off my horse and left stunned on the road."

At that moment Julia, who had got a supply of clothes out of her box, came into the kitchen to bring Old Comical to tell his story to George Grove, but, seeing her uncle, darted away as if she had seen a lion. The sight of her threw Sir John Lamsbroke into some astonishment, and that was like enough, for she was the last person in the world he expected to see in that house—it threw him into something else, too, viz., some small fear of getting contradicted in his story. Old Comical smoked his pipe and Sir John Lamsbroke too, at the same time, but held his tongue: yes, Old Comical was a wise man, for he knew when to hold his tongue: after drinking he would put a cork in his mouth to keep the liquor from taking air, and getting dead in his stomach. Curiosity, we suppose, may be

put down amongst our appetites, Old Comical, for his part, however, felt very hungry for a little more news upon this matter, and went out a gossiping for that purpose. He saw plainly, for he had his eyes in his head, that Julia could not be in two places at once, and this she must have been for her story and her uncle's to be both true. There was little reason to suppose that hers could be false, for what could induce her to tell a lie? Old Comical therefore went out to beat for intelligence: now it will happen at times that the truth will be told out of spite; being in the inn yard, he saw the landlord give one of the ostlers a kick, it was just the thing he wanted, and he made the best of it while the iron was hot.

"Is that the way the landlord pays his men their wages?" quoth Old Comical to the fellow.

"The devil take him," said the ostler, rubbing his bottom, "I have mind to blow him, we had a young lady carried out of the house last night, and have been all of us paid to keep the secret."

"Oh," said Old Comical, "she came with Sir John and another lady and gentleman, that's no news to me."

"Yes," said the fellow, "and went away with Sir John, for he and my master, and two others, forced her into a carriage and went off with her."

"Step this way," quoth Old Comical.

"No," said the fellow, "I mean to step another;" and ran out of the inn yard in a moment.

Old Comical could run as well as he, having had some practice in running, he followed the fellow like smoke, stuck to him like a leech, and drew the following particulars out of him: that Sir John, though he had been foiled, was determined not to give the matter up, and

was, at that moment, preparing matters for a second attempt. He loved Sir John as well as he did his master, he said, but was afraid he should never see both of them hanged in the same day, it were too much fun ever to come to his share, he had done nothing to deserve such a holiday as that. Upon which the fellow tied up both Sir John and the landlord in one hearty curse, and, making a furious plunge, broke away from Old Comical, leaving part of his jacket in his hands, turning a corner he was out of sight in a moment. Now amongst other parts of the said jacket the fellow had left one pocket with Old Comical, in which he found the following note:

TO SIR HARRY ST. CLAIR, BART.

DEAR HARRY,

Get out of town directly, and have your carriage ready at the wood side close by Denham's barn: we shall have her now: she's come back to the inn: I can't tell you more at present. We gave up the pursuit on our road—the carriage we heard go off was only a returned post chaise, we overtook it at the first town, it contained nothing but a farmer who had a pig wrapped up in a cloth, which was the white thing you saw put into it. No other carriage passed the turnpikes between the hours of one and four.—To your post, Harry.

Yours ever,

JOHN LAMSBROKE.

Poor Julia was still surrounded by Sir John and his gang, who were upon a sharp look-out for another opportunity to accomplish their purpose. But Old Comical smelt a rat. It will not be much amiss in this place just to state the situation of the parties:—John

Mathers, alias Old Comical, had now found out that Sir John Lamsbroke was the man who took Julia away, and, by the bottle which contained some laudanum being found in the room where George Grove, and Mrs. B. Decastro lay asleep, readily suspected that he had stupified them with an opiate to carry his design upon Julia, and in these conclusions the doctor, who was an honest man notwithstanding he was an apothecary, agreed: and surely the way to the said conclusions lay all down hill. Old Comical, who had heard of the terrible quarrel between Old Crab and Sir John, was not much at a loss neither to find a reason for such a revenge. Sir John forelaid his ground very well to escape a discovery; but when the devil tempts a man to commit a great sin, he cannot be satisfied, and be hanged to him, without bringing him to shame in the very upshot of all his glory, but this is not acting like a gentleman. Now in regard to Sir John himself, he was bent upon his design, and, as he had found Julia, had every reason to expect, with the help of some grave and pious people of his acquaintance, who at this moment beset the house where she was, that he should certainly carry it on a second attempt. He found, upon inquiry, that Old Comical was the man who brought Julia back to the inn, and fell to question him upon the matter; but Old Comical told him such a confused story that Sir John took it for granted that he must have been drunk when he first got hold of Julia: for Old Comical's memory was sadly perplexed upon the matter, and he talked about houses on fire, thunder, lightning, murder, and the devil. At last Sir John was c'en forced to give the matter up, for he could get nothing but confusion out of him; but as he did

not even then seem to be sober, Sir John expected that the lie he had told him would be forgotten, and took courage upon it to tell Julia's mother and husband another. He expressed his sorrow at what had happened, and great joy at the safety of Julia, showed the wound, and he took off the bandage on purpose, which, he said, he had received in an attempt to rescue her, and from the effects of which he was carried senseless into a house in the neighbourhood, where he lay some hours before he came to himself; to the truth of which he brought in one, who said he was the owner of the house, to swear, and that the man did in the most solemn manner. Sir John went on to say, that he was that moment come to the inn, the first moment his surgeon would let him stir, and a surgeon, or one who called himself so, was called in to attest it; that he had sent people in every direction to recover Julia; that one of the waiters, who was sent out of the way, had absconded from the inn, who was no doubt the rascal employed by these ravishers to put some intoxicating drug into the wine, or other liquors, which George and Julia's mother had partaken of, and he begged leave to call to the recollection of the parties that George and Julia's mother alone had drank white wine at dinner and after it. Having said this, and much more to the same purpose, he assured them that he had procured four stout men well armed to attend the carriage, and that now they might proceed on their journey to Lamsbroke Park in perfect security.

Old Comical, who held an ear at a key-hole, took an opportunity to give the parties a hint, and they put Sir John into a sort of fool's paradise; whatever he said was believed, and whatever he proposed was agreed to.

The party put themselves under Old Comical's direction, who was sober to nobody but George, Julia, and Mrs. B. Decastro. Old Comical knew how to bite a man, he was an old dog at that. George Grove asked Sir John how he could write a note from Mr. Pitman's, when, by his account, he had never been there? Sir John said, being determined to go there, he had written the note at the inn, before he went out; he then related what he did to rescue Julia, when he received the wound on his head which stunned him, and left him senseless.

Julia acted her part pretty well, but trembled sadly, at times, especially when her uncle came into the room and began to question her upon what had happened, but that might very well be attributed to the terrible subject of those questions, and Sir John seemed willing enough to do so. Julia begged to be excused coming to particulars until she had recovered from the shock which so dreadful an affair must very naturally be supposed to have given her, and hoped her uncle would be content, at present, to know, that she had received no other injury than a terrible fright.

When her mind grew a little calm she promised to satisfy him in every thing, and added, that she was sorry he had received any injury on her account. Perhaps she told a fib, but when one is in a great flutter one scarcely knows what one says.

Great philosophers hold, that a man never likes a knock on the head, more especially one that brings him covered with blood to the ground; now Sir John was a philosopher of this sect, who had received a blow on his pate as hard as Old Comical could strike it for his heart, that cut him open and set him a-bleeding like a

pig, and he felt a strange surmise that Old Comical was the man whose fist it was that gave the blow, or, in other words, that he had received the blow at his hand: now there are some gifts which a man of generosity wishes to return, a knock of the pate is one.

"John," said he to Old Comical, "we shall go presently, will you make one with us to guard the ladies?"

"I am on my master's business," said he, staggering about.

"How long shall you stay in this town, John?" said the baronet.

"I shall stay in it till I leave it," quoth Old Comical.

"Thou'rt an odd fish," rejoined the baronet, "and I should be glad to do thee a good turn for bringing off my beautiful niece so cleverly."

"I will take care to put myself in your way," quoth Old Comical, "the very first opportunity."

Some man coming into the inn yard where this talk befell, took Sir John away with him, upon which Old Comical went into the stable to look at his horse. Now there was a little crack in the stable door, which folks may think, if they please, was made on purpose, for through it Old Comical saw Sir John and the said man re-enter the yard and come both together into the corner where the stable formed an angle with another building.

"There is no talking in the street," said Sir John, "it is market day, and the place full, come this way, here is a snug corner."

Old Comical, hearing these words, stood close behind the door and inclined his ear, but unfortunately, and curious people are sometimes disappointed, a great part of their conversation was held in whispers, so that Old

Comical could not pick out a word. At their parting, however, Sir John said aloud, "if any thing of importance occurs, send me a note from the Star."

This was an inn in another part of the town which was occupied by one of Sir John's tenants, where he was quite as much at home as he was at the Crown, which was kept by an old servant who had married and settled in it, and was still very much at Sir John's service in any way he pleased. This little spark of intelligence aforesaid set fire to a train in Old Comical's pate; he suspected some mischief to be a-brewing, and made the best of his way to the Star, where, by putting an ear to a keyhole, he got possession of the following particulars, viz., that as soon as Sir John Lamsbroke's carriage got into the midst of some wood that lay in its way to Lamsbroke Park, it was to be stopped by some men, between whom and Sir John's people a feigned battle would be fought, in which the latter were to be defeated, and Julia forced into another carriage set at hand for that purpose.

Old Comical had now satisfied his curiosity, and it must have been a very unreasonable curiosity not to be satisfied with so much information; he thereupon took his ink-bottle out of his pocket, and blacking his face and his hands, rushed immediately into the room amongst the conspirators, and shutting the room door, said, "Gentlemen! for heaven's sake take care of yourselves!—your plot is discovered!"

"What plot d'ye mean, blackey?" said one, who had more presence of mind than the rest.

"Gentlemen," quoth Old Comical, "you know not what risk I run—I cannot stay a moment—you mean to stop a gentleman's carriage?"

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"We do," said one, "however by the help of the devil you came to know it."

"And take a beautiful girl out of it?" They confessed this, and with much surprise. "You are discovered by an old servant of the young lady's father, who has begged for a troop of horse of the commanding officer in his neighbourhood; look well to yourselves, every man of you will be made prisoners."

Upon which Old Comical darted out of the room in a moment, and left the good folks to digest the news at their leisure. He then washed his face and hands, and, calling for a basin of half-and-half, sat down on a bench at the inn door and smoked his pipe. It is wonderful how an unexpected piece of intelligence will turn a man's head! How small a blow will knock a man down when he is off his guard!—The conspirators were thunderstruck at this communication, but one, who came the soonest to his senses, ran out to see if he could find the black, in order to examine him further, and give him some reward for his services. Now the first man he, who ran out, saw, was Old Comical smoking his pipe upon the bench at the door, and, his back being towards him, took it for granted, by the colour of his coat, that he had found the man he wanted.

"Come this way, blackey," said he, and touched him on the shoulder.

"Blackey!" quoth Old Comical, turning his head round, "that's neither my name nor my colour."

"You saw a black man pass this way?"

"No," quoth Old Comical.

"You saw some man pass this?"

"No," quoth Old Comical.

"Did you ever tell a lie?"

"No," quoth Old Comical, "I don't know what a lie is, though I heard my mother say one morning to one of her maids, 'It is a lie, you slut!' and asked her what a lie was, but she would not tell me; she always kept the thing a secret from me,—the worse luck was mine,—for I have heard it said that a lie is a thing folks get rich by. Heaven bless your honour! Pray tell me what it is, that I may tell lies and fill my pockets."

"This is some fool," said the other, and ran back into the house to look for a black-a-moor. Now Sir John, it seems, was gone to prepare matters at a distance, and did not return for an hour, when he saw his coach drawn up, according to his order, at the inn door, but was a little surprised further to see it driven off at full gallop before he could come up to it. As his servants were not with it, he took it into his head that the drivers had a mind to take a flourish to move their horses, and meant to return presently. He was soon undeceived, however, when he saw them hold on for half a mile at the same rate of travelling, and then, turning a corner, vanish out of his sight. Upon which he pushed on in some haste, to get to the Crown, in order to despatch his servants after it, for he felt very much like a man that was left behind. The moment he turned his person round, Old Comical met him, with his face and hands blacked as before, and, putting a note into his hand, asked him sixpence for the carriage of it.

"Whence comes this?" said he.

"From the Star, and may it please your honour," pulling off his hat and his wig, exhibiting his bald pate blacked all over. Sir John opened the note in a great bustle, and read as follows:

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SIR JOHN,

COME to the landlord of the Star inn immediately; he has a matter of the utmost danger and importance to communicate: we have charged him to answer no questions until you shew him this note; it is not written in any hand which you know for very important reasons. The landlord of the Star will know my signature; shew him that and he will answer all questions.

R. B. Z. L.

When Sir John had read this note, and he seldom had read a note in a greater hurry, he put sixpence into Old Comical's hat and wig, held ready for charity, and made the best of his way to the Star, without ever stopping at the Crown in his way to send his servant after his carriage; and he had lost his labour if he had, for Old Comical had disposed of them in a manner soon to be explained if the writer does not do, as he very likely has done before, forget what he ought to remember. Sir John, coming into the Star, called for the landlord in a loud voice.

"My husband," quoth the landlady, sitting with much composure mending a pair of breeches, "is gone twenty miles this morning, to buy a bargain in the brandy line, Sir John, what might your honour want?"

"Want!" quoth he, swearing like a prince, "why, I want your husband this moment upon the most important business;" upon which he stamped upon the floor until his money rattled in his pockets. Old Comical, who followed him close at his heels, put another note into his hands, which contained the following words, viz.,

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SIR JOHN,

THE landlord at the Crown wants to speak with you this moment, upon a business wherein his life and your own are concerned. Come this moment. Your humble servant to command.

A FRIEND.

Away went Sir John back to the Crown, which was at least a quarter of a mile off, as fast as he could get his legs to carry him, scarcely knowing whether he went upon his head or his heels, and coming in asked, with all the breath which he had left, where the landlord was; upon which one, who stood by, said, "He was that moment gone to the Star inn, it might be to look for him." Tacking about to go back to the Star Old Comical met him again with another note, the words which it contained were as follows:

SIR JOHN,

Come to us at the Crooked Billet. We are all discovered. We dare as well eat our heads as show them at the Star; go not near that house as you value your life; one has written this for us, for we dare not so much as show our hands upon paper. Make haste.—

"Why where the devil do you pick up all these notes, you black rascal?" said Sir John to Old Comical.

"Dick is turned out," quoth Old Comical, "and I have just got the postman's place, and it may please your honour."

Sir John's head, and it was no wonder, by this time ran round upon his shoulders, and, acted upon like a planet by three forces, it were no wonder if he had run round too. He was conscious enough of course of the bad business he was upon; and, conceiving himself to

be in the midst of dangers, trembled from head to foot. At this time a post-chaise came into the yard with Watkins, the landlord of the Nag's Head, between two constables against whom Old Comical had laid an information, and he was welcome in that town, for he was an old acquaintance of all the magistrates, one of whom had readily enough taken Old Comical's information. Seeing Watkins, Sir John fell into a worse pucker than before, and walked into a stable to conceal his emotion. Old Comical, who had his eye upon him, washed his face and hands, and, putting on a great coat, followed him into the stable, and told him he had best conceal himself.

"Conceal myself!" quoth he, "How can I do it?"

"Lay down in that corner, and I will throw some horse-litter over you; I am sure there is something the matter, for I heard both the constables say that your honour had committed a rape!"

The baronet threw himself upon the stable floor, in a corner, and Old Comical covered him up with some of the nastiest horse-litter he could find. Leaving him there he led his horse out into the stable-yard, which was now in an uproar, for the landlord of the Star, and the landlord of the Crown, who were just come into it, fell upon one another like two mastiffs, and fought like mad men, upon what cause will presently be said; when Old Comical mounted his horse, after having paid his bill like an honest man, and, trotting out of the inn yard, galloped after his party, not at all suspected to be the author of all the confusion. Now Old Comical, it is said, laughed by fits all the way until he came to the ferry at Oaken Grove, when, catching a glimpse of poor Genevieve's cottage, a tear ran down Old Comical's

check, and dropt upon his horse's mane. He took his nose betwixt his finger and thumb and blew the same, notwithstanding, and then took the horn, which hung at the post, and blew that almost as loud to call the ferryman.

"How now, Old Comical," quoth he, "your eyes look red."

"Dost see that house there?" quoth Old Comical,—
"happened to drop an eye upon it, you understand me—happened just to drop an eye upon it, and I felt for all the world as if my heart was in a pair of nut-crackers!"

"Come, come, John," said the ferryman, "we have had enough of that—Ah, poor lady! Well, half a year is passed since that sad business; I have looked at that house, John, many a time and cried like a child."

"More fool you," quoth Old Comical; "I have looked at it and cried like a man."

"Master Acerbus, they say," rejoined the ferryman, "is still at the University, pale and thin with grief."

"That's no wonder," quoth Old Comical, "I never knew a philosopher that was not a great fool; one of the wisest told people that he was one, for fear they should not find it out; or for fear they should."

"Poor Madam Genevieve!" quoth the ferryman, wiping his eyes with the sleeve of his jacket, "that such a beautiful woman, upon such a day—upon her wedding-day—O John, John, she has left a sore place in every heart that knew her!"

"Sore places and sour faces don't suit me," quoth Old Comical; "put the boat ashore and give us a pot of your best stingo, old cock-a-doodle. How long is it since Sir John's carriage came over?"

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“Three hours since,” quoth the ferryman, “but what is become of Sir John and the servants?”

“They stay behind to take physic,” quoth Old Comical; “they have foul insides.”

“What, you met them on the road?”

“Yes, and it was my advice that they should stop and take physic for reasons aforesaid. They were all going to Lamsbroke Park, but the thing was not agreeable to my good will, pleasure and inclinations, so I put some to the edge of tincture of rhubarb, and sent the rest home again until further orders; I, myself, I did this, who am the greatest man in the world except one, —and he is old Susan Kinkerbottom with her thumbs growing out of her elbows;—what d’ye think of that, old cock-a-doodle?”

CHAPTER IX

What happened at Oaken Grove after the Arrival of Mrs. B. Decastro, Julia, George Grove and Old Comical.—Some further Account of Sir John Lamsbroke and his Servants.

OH that one should write nonsense and another be made to pay for it!—Made! reader, we make no makes. If a man goes into a bookseller's shop he comes down with his voluntary penny. The man that buys a horse and finds fault with his maker is a fool: if a book is a good book you have great pleasure in reading it; if bad you have still a greater in finding fault with it; if neither one thing nor the other you have the greatest pleasure of all—a sweet sleep.

The ferryman now put Old Comical and his horse on shore, and fell again to his questions about Sir John Lamsbroke.

“You may talk of the devil as long as you please,” quoth Old Comical, “but name that man's name no more to me. The godfathers and godmothers made a great mistake when they named that child. If I had stood at the font, and the parson had said to me, Name this child, I would have called him a rascal.—Come, come, cheer up, old Cock-a-doodle, a plague upon that house, (meaning poor Genevieve's cottage,) we shall never see another merry face at the ferry while that stands in sight! This is as pretty a pot of ale as ever was put together by any man that ever wore a brewer's

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apron," quoth Old Comical, drinking his beer; "how do I stand upon the wall?"

"Seven shillings, John, and this last pot makes sixpence."

"Well, I cannot run away on this side the ferry, for I shall have water all round me, and that's a sort of thing, unless there is plenty of malt and hops in it, that frightens me out of my wits!—Good day, old acquaintance."

"Aye," quoth the ferryman, that is to himself, "how things turn about in this world. Now I remember this merry fellow, eighteen years ago come next Lammas, as ragged as a mop, and as thin as a weasel, when he first set his foot into my boat with a three-legged stool under one arm, and a bundle of ballads under the other; who would have looked at him then, and trusted him for a pint of small beer? Aye, see how things turn about in this world, now this beggar and his ballads is come, all on a sudden, to be a man of vast substance, and worth, as folks talk, upwards of three thousand pounds a year!—Why, lookee there now, this would have made some people as proud as the devil, there would have been such turning up of noses and cocking of tails! But honest John Mathers is just the same—will get upon his stool and sing a ballad at my ale-house door just as he used to do: aye, and if a poor fellow's pot is empty he'll fill it—aye, I have seen him throw five shillings down like dust on a summer's day, when the poor fishermen have sat upon my bench eating their dinner. Blankets and great coats, cloaks, shifts, stockings and flannel petticoats given away, not to mention breeches, wigs and night-caps!—Seven and six-pence upon tick! I wish there was a hundred pounds in good

chalk there with all my heart, and Old Comical's name at the foot of it!"—Saying which the ferryman went to the wall, and, taking his chalk, scored up Old Comical another six-pence. Old Comical loved a pot of good ale.

Now we are come to Oaken Grove again, we will, reader, if you please,—for, though we squabble a little at times, we are good friends, we hope, at the bottom—we will, if you please, my dearest reader, walk into the castle once more, see who is there, and what is going forward in it. But alas, the magnificent, the sprightly Genevieve meets us no more!—Her sparkling eyes, her smiling lips, her heaving bosom, and her open hand gives us no more welcomes here! Oh world, world!—we had better lose thee at once than lose the best parts of thee! when robbed of that which makes thee rich to us, when robbed of thy jewels, and thy gems, what art thou but an empty casket left? when the precious stone is gone—what grief to view the hollow where the ruby shone!—Well, but, some when they lose a thing try to find fault with it, in order to lessen the loss and their sorrows for the same. Genevieve, it is true, was a piece of earth, and therefore had her faults, but what fault had she, poor girl, but what sprang from the luxuriance of some virtue? from generosity, from friendship, and from love? Heaven gave poor Genevieve a heart as warm as ever woman had, or could have in the world, and its strong desires for the good of others ran her away into extravagancies beyond the inclusive hoop and ring of reason. Genevieve never did a wrong thing for the sake of it; nor a right one but for the sake of it: but to speak of her virtues is as good as to say they need to be told to be known, one must look for them to

find them, and hold the flame of praise close to them for others to see them. No, no need of light in the midst of so much sunshine. Every one who knew Genevieve must at least be as much convinced of her virtues, as any who saw her person must needs be struck with her beauty.—Genevieve, farewell! though thou art gone, still our hearts hold thee. Poor Acerbus! what spite was that which Fortune owed thee there? How bright the sun rose on thy wedding-day, and in what clouds it fell!—None but the man who loved as well as thou didst, and lost as much, could know what grief was thine. All thou hadst of her was a few kisses—the rest——But, if the reader loves crying as little as ourselves, he will be equally glad to change the subject.

It was thought, after the lake had been dragged with nets for ten days for her body, that some whirlpool, or spinning water, must have drawn it under the banks, where it might have got entangled in the roots of trees and hung there, for no search could be more diligently made, inasmuch as, wherever there appeared any thing like a vortex in the water, divers were sent down to explore the bottom; nothing, however, but her hat, which was torn in a very unaccountable manner, and one of its ribands, floating at some distance from it, could be found. Poor Acerbus took leave of his father and mother in a silent agony, and retired to Oxford where he made the best use of his philosophy to heal the wounds of his mind. A will was found by which her whole property was left to her husband, a few legacies excepted; it was found in a cabinet at the castle, where she continued to keep her old apartment, sealed up in one of Old Crab's sermon-cases: it was directed

to her husband, and at the bottom of the will were written these words:

“Farewell, my dearest dear Acerbus!—It is impossible that you should ever know how much I loved you.”

Six months had now elapsed since this sad accident, and Mr. and Mrs. Decastro were recovering from the gloom which this sad matter had cast upon their minds, when Julia made her escape in the lucky manner just recited, from the hands of her uncle and a set of profligate wretches, who combined with him in a plot as black as the devil. Mrs. B. Decastro, Julia, and her husband, had come about three hours before Old Comical arrived, who staid behind to embroil Sir John and his worthy friends to prevent a pursuit, which he did pretty effectually, as hath been said. The Hindermark family were immediately sent for, when the party were soon after joined by Old Crab, who had been from home on some business, and a consultation was held upon this affair at the castle.

While the good folks were laying their heads and their brains together, Old Comical came in and told his story, which, perhaps, was one of the oddest stories ever told, and wrought the oddest effects, some of anger, some of indignation, some of surprise, some of gratitude, and some of loud laughter. Old Comical raising an alarm by fire in Watkins’s house, was an expedient much commended, because, had he been taken with Julia in his arms, he had the best excuse in the world for being found with her in his possession—viz., the having caught her up to save her from being burned to death. Add to which, the bustle and confusion such an alarm must occasion must needs give him

the very best of all chances to get clear off with her, while every body's head ran upon his own danger. Every body agreed too, that his pig in a poke was no bad thought, and Old Comical observed that "it certainly saved Julia's bacon." For when Sir John, who came to the inn immediately after him, and asked what the chaise contained, heard of the farmer and his pork, he made no further inquiries about the matter. The confusion which he stirred up in the town too, amongst Sir John and his gang, gave full time for the party to make their escape. Thanks were voted to Old Comical on all hands, and Mr. Grove made him a present of a noble silver tankard, with a richly embossed cover on it, out of which Old Comical said he would drink his strong beer as long as he lived. This, though much was offered, was the only thing he would take, except a kiss from Julia, which he begged for, and said it was worth all the rest. Julia submitted with a pretty blush, and he took it where the rose looked the reddest on her cheek. Poor Julia, however, was not to escape quite harmless, for the agitation of her mind occasioned by this terrible event brought on a miscarriage of her first child, from which, however, she happily recovered.

But we will go back to the Crown, and pull Sir John out of the horse muck. The ostler at the Crown has already done it for us; at least given the baronet a hint to turn out with a stable fork, which he very unfeelingly stuck into his back when he came to clean out his stable, and, not knowing what lay hid in it, took Sir John for a part of the dunghill. Sir John, upon feeling the prong in his flesh, roared out, and frightened the ostler out of the stable and his wits at once! While the ostler ran into the house for company, and to tell

the story, he made his escape out of the inn yard into the fields behind the town, and, though a man might smell him a mile, he contrived to steal away, as they say of a fox, and come safe to Lamsbroke park on foot. As for his servants who attended him on this disastrous expedition, Old Comical had communicated a piece of intelligence that frightened them out of that diocese; and neither they nor their horses, for they became theirs when they stole them, were ever heard of any more. Another thing had happened, too, in this town while we were engaged at the castle. The landlord of the Crown, and mine host of the Star, after they had beaten one another longer than they could see, and as long as they could move, discovered that the notes which brought them together by the ears, for Old Comical had done them the honour to correspond with both of these gentlemen, were forgeries, and that they had thrown away their time, kicks and cuffs upon objects by no manner of means deserving such marks of loving kindness. What became of Sir John, and his gang, will be said at another time, and what measures were taken by Julia's friends in regard to them; we must now proceed to tell a tale which will very much interest and astonish the reader: It follows in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X

Old Comical sent upon an Errand by his Master Old Crab—A strange Adventure of his—Some account of a great Bundle of Rags which he finds in a Cattle-market—Part of its History.

THE next day after Old Comical's return, Old Crab opened his little parlour window and looking into the farm-yard:

"John," quoth he, "come in and settle the account for the oxen which you sold."

Upon hearing Old Crab's voice, the lord of the manor of Cock-a-doodle put on his clothes, for he was at that time threshing out some peas for the hogs, and came to his master in the little parlour, holding the foot of an old black stocking full of money in one hand, and a bit of paper in the other which contained a way bill of the beasts and their names, with the price each sold for set at right angles with its name, all regularly drawn out and summed up under pounds, shillings and pence; and per contra a table of expenditures. Upon casting his eye over the account Old Crab stroked his face, his usual sign when he was pleased, and said, "Well, John, this will do—this lot pays us well; go and take my brother his rent for my farm, and you may set out in the morning to fetch the stores: you had best take Tom and the Shepherd with you, there will be more than two of you can well manage if they chance to be ill tempered—it is my positive order that no goads be used."

So Old Comical, Tom, and the Shepherd set out the next morning on a journey of forty miles to bring home a lot of store beasts to take place of the fat lot which had been just sold. Madam Funstall waved her short hand to Old Comical as he rode by Dillies Piddle in the morning,—when his horse, stopping on a sudden occasion which must be nameless here, viz., to make, there's no harm in saying a drop of water, gave the lovers a short but a sweet moment of mutual converse and a kiss. Old Comical, who had no time to lose, then trotted on and overtook Tom and the Shepherd. And we must trot on too and come immediately to the town where the store oxen were held in readiness for Old Crab's order.

Now, Reader, you must imagine that you see Old Comical bustling about in a cattle-market, examining and counting over his master's beasts to see and feel that all be right, and the figure of a woman, covered with dirt and rags leaning upon a hurdle and staring at him with fixed eyes. Coming near her, "Old female," quoth he, without taking any regard of her, "stand out of the way," and opening the hurdle upon which she leaned, gave the word of command in a loud voice, "Turn em out!" and counted the oxen all over again as they passed him one by one.

Now it came to pass as soon as the beasts were all delivered to the drovers, the money paid, and the way bill drawn out and Old Comical had mounted his horse to return home, the ragged woman pulled him by the coat, and said, "Why, you old toad, don't you know me?"

Old Comical stared into her face, when she pulled off a thing that once was a hat which concealed a good

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deal of it and roared out loud enough for all the market to hear him, "'Sume my body if here isn't Beauty!"

It was Genevieve herself, that stood before him in this deplorable condition, and the reader may remember that was the name he always called her by. She turned about to conceal her emotion, and beckoned to Old Comical to follow her, when, giving his orders to the drovers, he dismounted, took his horse by the bridle and followed Genevieve. He soon overtook her, staring like one who scarcely believed his own eyes.

"John," said she, "have you got any money in your pocket, for I am almost starved to death!—I have not eaten a morsel of any thing this day but a raw turnip—and look, the sun is set."

"Money," quoth Old Comical with tears in his eyes,—"aye, plenty—heaven be thanked"—he could not speak another word at that time, but burst out a-laughing and crying together. Genevieve did all she could to comfort him, and for a few minutes forgot her hunger. "Come," said Old Comical, "this moment to the Bell," which was an inn, "for you look as if you could eat my horse, saddle, and all!—where in the world do you come from, and where in heaven, or in hell, or in earth have you been?—why, 'sume my body if they haven't buried you at Oaken Grove, and there stands your monument in the church yard with an epitaph upon it to tell folks what you were good for."

Saying which Old Comical pulled off his hat and flung it upon the ground, then pulled off his wig and flung that after it, raised his hands and eyes to the clouds, and stamped first with one foot, then with the other, like a madman. Genevieve picked up his wig and put it upon his head, and put his hat upon that,

and begged he would come to the Bell and get her some victuals, for she was like to faint with hunger!—The Bell was at hand, where Old Comical was not only known as Old Comical, but as a man of large possessions, and one that could call about him with great authority.

“Here! ostler, take my horse,” quoth he, and a very fine animal he was, bought on purpose to go a-courting to Madam Funstall of Dillies Piddle, and cost Old Comical a hat full of money!

“Waiter,” quoth he, “a room this moment!—the Sun, you dog, for I have a lady of great quality with me, and must have the best room in the house!—Landlord! a bill of fare!—what the plague d’ye stand sniggering there for when a gentleman and lady are hungry and want their dinner! Chambermaid! a gentlewoman wants you—take her up the best stair case—where the devil are ye a-going—into the coal cellar?”

Genevieve was walking into the room,—when “Heyday,” quoth the landlord, “where are you coming, you nasty draggile-tail slut?—get out of the house, you impudent beggar—here, ostler—turn this saucy trull into the street, and, d’ye hear? take her through the horse pond on her way!”

“Hold hard,” quoth Old Comical, “hands off—let that lady alone, for by the glory of the stars I’ll break the first man’s bones in his body that touches her with his little finger!—hands off.—This lady, who now stands before us, is a person of very high quality and connexions, worth a hundred thousand pounds, related to some of the first families in the kingdom,—bred in the best schools, best company, and the best houses, has been used from a child to eat, drink, wash, and do

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all her occasions in silver, was introduced at Court to the King and to the Queen in a gown and petticoat plastered all over with silver and gold, and wore a string of pearls round her neck as big as a rope of onions. If there had been a better inn in the town I should not have brought her here—so you may take my coming for a compliment.”

Upon which Old Comical begged Genevieve's pardon for keeping her standing in the passage, and then, taking off his hat, and opening a door, showed her into a room, and sent a man, called, for distinction's sake, and his high office, the head waiter, who took all matters with him necessary for furnishing a table in the most elegant manner for dinner. This man had not yet seen Genevieve, and when he came into the room and saw Old Comical's guest he was turned into a marble statue with a knife-tray in one hand, a bread-basket in the other, and a fine damask table-cloth under his arm. Now what image of stone would not fall into a rage in a moment if a man robbed it of its property? Genevieve, the moment she caught a sight of the bread-basket, flew at it like a vulture that had not eat a bit for a week, and began to devour the bread like mad! This unpetrified the waiter, who seized a poker to drive her out of the house. What followed we must leave to be told by Genevieve herself.

The people of the inn, where Old Comical had played off many a piece of fun, took it for granted that he was upon his old tricks, let matters be as he would have them, and obeyed his orders in everything, and the house did not grin itself, but every body in it did that knew how to grin.

Folks were not a little disappointed, however, the

next morning, when he paid his bill and put Genevieve and all her rags into a post-chaise and four with a most serious countenance, going off at full gallop after the post-boys without letting them, as far as they wished to come, into the secret.

When one thing goes at a full gallop, and another at a foot pace, the reader we suppose will not wonder when he finds, that the former thing overtakes the latter thing after a little while. Now this was just the case with Old Comical and the store oxen, for he not only overtook them the next day on the road, but what was quite as extraordinary, went by them upon a full gallop after the post-chaise and four.

“All right?” quoth he to the drovers as he flourished by them.

“All right, John,” quoth they, and Old Comical and the post-chaise and four were out of sight in a moment.

“Shepherd,” quoth Tom, “Old Comical is upon some of his fun again, did ye see the beggar-woman in the post-chaise?”

“Aye, Tom, he has been pretty much down of late since the death of Madam Genevieve; he has not sung us a song, or played us a trick, for this half-year—I think o’ my conscience John took that matter to heart as much as any of us:—but we are like to have a bit of fun upon the road now I see—let us put on a little, he will have all the joke to himself else.”

“I should like vastly to know what he is going to do with that nasty toad in the chaise,” quoth Tom; “he has a world of money to be sure, or else he could not afford to play such pranks.”

Tom and the Shepherd, however, saw no more of Old

Comical and his ragged gentlewoman until they got home.

If any thing old, new, or strange come out, what a stir it makes in people's brains! Now a beggar in a post-chaise and four horses, and a servant riding after her, for in such a place Old Comical appeared, was matter of some wonder, and it brought folks about Genevieve's carriage to see the sight. All this happened at a distance, but as soon as Old Comical came amongst his old acquaintance, people ran after him and the chaise as if it were a raree-show, and it was as much as he could do to prevent people from opening the doors of the carriage; and they certainly had done it, if Old Comical had not told them to wait till the jest was ripe, and they should all share in the fun. This kept them quiet, and a great many followed the carriage into the castle yard at Oaken Grove, when Old Comical unriddled the matter, and they made a great noise for joy.

Now Mr. and Mrs. Decastro, not expecting any company, were a little surprised to hear a carriage come into the castle yard, and sent out Old Crab, who happened to be there, to see whom it brought to their house. Old Comical, putting down the step, handed out Genevieve and some of her rags, forasmuch as she left a great many in the chaise; she might put a man in mind of a tree in autumn; every puff of wind brought off her clothes in little bits as it fares with a tree at the fall of the leaf. Old Crab, seeing a beggar get out of the carriage, turned to Old Comical and said, "You will bring your jests to the wrong market some day, you blockhead, what foolery is this?" when Genevieve, who was hung in the chaise by her rags, made a

dash, tore her way out by main force, and, making a false step, fell upon Old Crab, who, not expecting such a heavy matter to come upon him on a sudden, took a step or two back to make his ground good. At that moment curiosity brought George Grove to the door, and a thing, which it would have puzzled a learned milliner to have said what part of a woman it was intended to cover, having fallen off Genevieve's head, he got sight of her face, and cried out "Here's Genevieve come to life again!"

Now it is possible for a man to be so near a woman's face as not to be able to distinguish her features; this was just Old Crab's case, who, hearing her name, pushed her from him to see her the better.

"O my dear uncle," said she, "it is no wonder you don't know me in this my wretched condition—let me go and get some clothes and I will come and tell you a strange story."

There is a time when rags can get no worse, and that time was come to poor Genevieve's apparel, and there was such a strange mixture of things upon her that it was no easy matter for one to say by her dress if she was man or woman. To come to some particulars, she had an old pair of blue trousers on, which appeared not only below a thing which was once a petticoat, but through it in twenty places. Round her waist she had tied an old piece of tapestry with figures in it. It was a piece of scripture history, there lay Mrs. Potiphar half naked, whose body was blue, upon a bed whose furniture was yellow, and Mrs. Potiphar seemed to have pulled Joseph in two, for all she had got hold of was an arm, one leg and a bit of his doublet; all the rest of Joseph had run away! This piece of tapestry

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was so ragged before that she had put a bit of an old mat over it which served as an apron; Joseph and Mrs. Potiphar hung down behind.

But, if the fair reader will have a little patience, she will receive a full account of Genevieve's dress from Genevieve herself, for the women are the best judges of women's matters; though there are some men, more shame for them, who are fain to set up for great wisdom in these things, and must needs be twilling and quilling and frilling and fiddling and faddling with ruffs and tufts and puffs and muffs; what have men to do with lace and ribands and gauze and tiffanies when they ought to go to plough? What a shame it is in a hardy, brave, and warlike nation, that such a thing as a man milliner should be suffered to wear a pair of breeches in it! If such must needs follow women's trades, may the prime minister put them into petticoats by act of Parliament! We have a great inclination, reader, to run a little further upon this subject, but we must not digress too far. It is best to keep in the road when nothing can be got by running out of it: and the game just mentioned is not worth breaking fences for.

To return: We must now say who were at the castle when the aforesaid ragged gentlewoman made her appearance there. Perhaps apparition were a fitter phrase, if the weight of her body coming slap dash upon Old Crab had not borne him down, that she was no such insubstantial matter as a ghost:—look you, reader, we will have no tossing of noses at that beautiful expression "*slap dash*," it is a very fine piece of coin, a phrase so sublime that no dictionary on the face, or what is not the face, of the earth can show any expression at all like it—At the castle were Mr. and Mrs. Decastro,

George Grove and Julia, Mr. and Mrs. Grove, Madam Tacklecrack, Old Comical, Mrs. B. Decastro, and Old Crab, when Genevieve came home such a figure that if the crows had got sight of her they would have left the kingdom! Their astonishment was as far beyond imagination as it is description, and it is all the better for us, for we cannot of course be expected to say much more about it. After a world of wonder, congratulations, tears and speeches—kisses indeed were few, for none were willing to come near Genevieve in her present attire save Julia, who, as soon as she knew her friend, flung herself into her arms and kissed her eagerly, notwithstanding Genevieve begged that nobody should meddle with her until she was fit to be touched—after a world of wonder, &c., Genevieve retired to her old apartment, where she found everything just as she left it. It had been kept by the desire of Acerbus just as it was before he lost her. He took a melancholy pleasure in coming there, at times, to mourn his loss;—yes, and to be put in sad remembrance of old times!

The moment she entered her old room Genevieve burst into tears; here she cast off all her rags, and, a bath having been prepared, she stepped into it, and washed herself from head to foot; the water was very clear when Genevieve stepped into it, but not so very clear when she stepped out of it; and Genevieve was very white, as white as the purest snow when she stepped out of it, but not quite so white as the whitest snow when she stepped into it. This is all very silly, and comes just in one's way when one is in a hurry to get on;—you are mighty ready to quarrel with us, reader, but some are not content unless distinctions are made, and differences pointed out, as is done in this

place between the colour of the water when Genevieve stepped into it, and the colour of the water when she stepped out of it, and left what she left in it; as also, and likewise, between the colour of her skin when she put her person into the bath—and when she took herself out of it: for wise folks say no character can be well drawn unless every variety of colour be nicely distinguished.

It is matter of great importance, and therefore fit to be recorded here, that Genevieve had not lost the keys of her drawers in her late expedition; but she had them all safe, reader, in a leather bag which served her for a pocket. There was the key of her bureau, and the key of her escritoir, the key of her cabinet, one drawer of which had been broken open, and the key of her strong box, and the key of her trunk where she kept a variety of necessary matters, and many other keys all put upon a little steel ring together. It is in the bringing little things into notice that great writers excel others. Some are not content unless a man come to little matters in great folks, and would give the world to know how a heroine sticks a pin, or a hero takes a pinch of snuff; as if a man who is wonderful in great things must needs be as wonderful in little ones. Matters are pushed further, and little folks will imitate great ones in their faults, and expect to be applauded for their virtues. A great man's little things will never bear a microscope, when it is odds if some of his great ones will not bide too nice an examination.

Genevieve was grown thinner, which was an advantage to her person, for she grew fat while Acerbus was courting her, which some have done before, but for a different reason. Whatever else she had lost during her extraordinary excursion, of which an account will

soon be given, she lost no beauty by it, but had gained, for when attired in her white muslins and all her nice things, none had ever seen her look so well: her cheeks glowed, and her black eyes sparkled with pleasure when she returned to the drawing room, and many were willing to kiss her, who were afraid to do so before. Ah, but the kiss the most desired was not yet to be had! She looked for her Acerbus, she asked for her dear husband, but he was not there!

"Where is he," cried she, holding up her eager arms, "where is my dearest husband?" her tears falling fast into her bosom!

"Be comforted," exclaimed Julia, "he is alive, he is safe—well indeed he cannot be said to be—he is at—" poor Julia could get no further; her bosom panted, and her tears ran down.

"Where is he?" cried Genevieve again.

There was nothing so sad in the word Oxford, but Julia could get no further.

A man is made on purpose to be pulled about in this world, his passions are the ropes by which things pull at him. Love pulls him this way, hatred pulls him that, love the other. At this moment curiosity pulled folks as hard at the castle as any to hear Genevieve give some account of herself, but one pulled the dinner-bell just at this time, which may be added to a man's other pulls, and it is sometimes as hard a pull as all the rest of his pulls put together. When this pull was over, which was not over till after dinner, curiosity again laid fast hold of the rope, and Genevieve, pulled in her turn by a desire to gratify her friends, as soon as the dessert and wines were served, told the following very curious story.

CHAPTER XI

Genevieve's Narrative

MY dearest relations and friends, I have a story now to tell you which will strike you all with astonishment, a story which if it were to be read to you out of a romance, you might, if well told, commend the ingenuity of it, but must disbelieve its contents, admire the genius and address of the author, but utterly condemn him for telling improbable things.

But without further preface or preamble, you must know, that on the evening of my wedding-day, I had a mind to take a little walk by myself upon the banks of the lake. The sky was cloudless and the sun was falling in great beauty. Coming to the rosary, the weather being sultry, I sat down upon the seat and took the fresh breezes from the water, ruminating by myself upon the importance of the day, and what might follow so grand an era as my marriage in the history of my life. My mind was full of the most pleasing thoughts of my dearest Acerbus, when, on a sudden, I heard the sound of oars upon the lake, but taking it for granted to be some fishermen going out with their nets, I thought little of it until six or seven men with their faces blacked, or craped, ran round the rosary and intercepted my retreat to the house. One, who seemed to be the largest of them, seized me, but I soon flung him from me on the ground and part of my gown along

with him, and breaking the line of the others, by rushing through them, I took to my heels and ran towards the castle so swiftly, that I fairly outran several of them who started with me in the race. I could easily have made my escape, but they that were behind, seeing me outrunning my pursuers, let loose a large mastiff which they had brought with them. The dog soon overtook me, and fastening on my clothes, threw me down over him, and we rolled upon the ground together. I seized the animal by his throat, and, as I thought, utterly strangled him; for I choked him off and threw him gasping at a distance from me and was upon my legs again, but too late. Five men seized me, and bound my hands with some difficulty behind my back, led me down again to the water, put me into their boat and rowed me to the other side of the lake.

I called for help until Oaken Grove re-echoed to my voice, but those echoes were soon silenced by an handkerchief which was tied over my mouth. I was then dragged to a carriage, which had been until that moment concealed from me by some bushes, and some attempted to force me into it. I now made a violent effort, with all my strength burst the bandage which tied my arms, broke away and ran to the boat, got into it before they could overtake me, actually succeeded in pushing it off, and should have got away, if, by too much exertion, I had not broken the darting-pole in putting from the shore, when two of my followers dashed into the water and tugged the boat back again—if I had had a moment's presence of mind I could have beaten both their brains out with a piece of the broken pole.

("It were a pity but you had," quoth Old Crab.)

I could easily have done it, disabled as they were

from getting at me, for they were as deep as their breasts in the water—my lot forbade:—as soon as they had succeeded in pulling me to shore, I had pistols put to my head and my bosom, and I found it best to submit. I was forced into the carriage, and driven off. I again burst an handkerchief into two pieces that tied my arms, for I was bound a second time, and pulling the bandage from my mouth, I got a little breath, for I was almost suffocated, part of my nose as well as my mouth being tied up. As soon as my hands were at liberty I attempted to open a side window in order to get at the hasp of the carriage door, but, to my no small surprise, I could find no window or window-blind, but was shut up like Jack in a box in total darkness. By a vast effort I let a little light into the carriage through a cranny which I had wrenched open with my shoulders, but could force it no further, and I was not quite sylph enough to make my escape through a crack.

When I had kicked about until I was tired in vain, I was fain to sit still, wondering not a little at this strange adventure, and what was to be done with me, who they could be that thought me worth stealing, and whither I was to be carried. I was dreadfully frightened, I confess, but felt no little confidence in my strength, and was determined to exert it to the utmost the next opportunity. This thought kept me quiet, and I was now in a mind to save myself the best way I could, and make no more attempts to break the carriage open, which I really think I had sufficient strength to have done if I had continued my exertions. It was pretty evident, however, that the thing would have been of little avail if I had done it, surrounded as I was with a

banditti of armed men, who, I was confident, would have shot me dead sooner than let me get away.

After two hours running, and that at no little rate, the carriage stopped on a sudden, and it was some wonder too, that the horses held out so long, the pace considered at which they ran. Upon which one put a key into the carriage door, which gave me to understand that I had been locked in, and opening it, the door of some house presented itself, and a woman, standing at it with a candle in her hand, the light of which almost blinded me, beckoned me to get out, which I readily did, but looking on each side of me, saw three men placed on either hand armed with pistols, to prevent my escape. I got out, and followed the woman, who took me to the foot of a staircase. I told her in a firm voice I would die at the foot of it before I would ascend it. She said not a word, for she was as silent as my other attendants, but turning round, opened a room door and I walked into it, where I found some cold meats put upon a neat table, and some wines set at hand; she pointed to both as a signal for me to eat, and going out shut the door and locked me into the room. I was extremely thirsty, and that was no wonder, my great exertions considered, so I drank a glass of wine and water, but ate nothing. I searched the room round, as it may easily be supposed, to find a place to get out, but the windows were barred with iron, and I was as safe as a bird in a cage. I had not been there more than half an hour before the door was opened again by the woman, who shook her head in answer to all I could say, and a man, whose face was craped, came in with a horse pistol in his hand and made a sign that I should follow him. When I came

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out, the six men were placed as before, three on either hand, and I heard them all cock their pistols as I passed them to the door of the carriage—and in again I was forced to get—there was no remedy, but whether it was to show their confidence in my security, or for any other reason, I was permitted to have my hands and mouth at liberty. I threatened, and promised, and called for help, but I soon found that I might as well be quiet.

I was locked in a second time, and away they went with me. Where I was, or what road they had taken, I could form no idea. Escape was still uppermost in my mind, but I thought it would be prudent to make no attempt until I could do it to some good purpose, and I cherished a hope that I should effect it before it were long. After having gone at the same rate as before for some considerable time I pressed my repeater, and found the time to be a quarter after two.

We presently stopped again, the carriage door was unlocked, and I was permitted to get out while the horses were changed, as before. The same silence and ceremonies were observed, I was put into a room by some old woman, from whom I could not get one word. I repeated my promises of high rewards for my liberty, my threats, and my calls for assistance, but with equal success—I was locked into the room where refreshments were placed upon a side table. I drank some more wine and water, but ate nothing. I went to a window, and, opening it, found it secured with iron bars on the outside, and, by the light of the moon, could see into some gentleman's garden. I called aloud for help, but might as well have called for a troop of soldiers. Now my spirits began to fail me. I began to

think whatever the purpose of carrying me off might be that it would not be in my power to prevent it. I recommended myself to heaven with tears, and prayed fervently for protection. The door was now unlocked and a man entered with a pistol in his hand: I watched it with hopes of getting it. I said, in a firm voice, I would go no further, and, seizing the pistol which he held in his hand, wrenched it from him. It went off, however, and was of no further use than to bring in the whole gang to his assistance. I was immediately led back to the carriage with loaded pistols held at my head and at my bosom, when I again took my seat in it, and was driven off. I made an attempt as I was going to the carriage to snatch another of their pistols, but it had like to have cost me my life, for the ruffian snapped it at my head, but it luckily missed fire. This act of his seemed to be highly resented by the rest, for I saw no more of him.

I was now convinced that their threats were no vain ones, and that I might expect to be shot if I made any violent attempt to get away. As soon as I was again put into the carriage, for they were civil enough to hand me into it, my thoughts ran upon every dreadful thing my situation could excite, my death I was sure could be at no great distance, for, if their object was my dishonour, I felt quite determined upon putting their utmost vengeance to the risk sooner than submit. Amongst other wild imaginations self-destruction occurred to me, and, if at any time I thought it would be lawful, now, I even began to consider by what means I could effect it, when the cheering hope of escape interfered, and I felt that while the least remained I ought not to cherish any thought of it. At

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last, my exertions, agitation of mind, and the hour of rest uniting their forces upon me, threw me into a sleep; I dreamed that my dear Acerbus had rescued me, and when the carriage stopped I awoke in unspeakable horror. A flood of tears gave me some relief.

It was some time before the door was unlocked, and I began to doubt if I should be permitted to get out. Presently, however, it was opened and I found it to be day, but very gloomy, for we were in the middle of some wood. I was conducted to a room in some house by my guards, and locked into it as before; it had one window in it, and a door which opened into a garden: but I should have observed that when I was taken out of the carriage this time I was blindfolded, and my arms held by two or three on each side of me until put into the room, when I was left at my liberty, as far as the use of my limbs went, though a prisoner in other respects. As soon as I was locked into the room I took the bandage off my eyes, which was a silk handkerchief, it had the letter F. marked in one corner of it. Finding myself alone I ran instantly to the door which opened into a garden, and, to my inexpressible joy, found it open. I darted into the garden like a wild bird out of its cage, but the joy I felt served but to enhance my grief when I saw a high wall encircle me on all sides, over which it was impossible to climb.

After wandering about the garden for some time, which was darkened by the cypress and the yew, I returned to my room, where I found, by the provision that had been made in it, that, whatever they meant to do with me, they had no intentions at present to starve me to death! I felt as one who wanted food without being hungry; my thirst, however, was excessive, and

I drank a large basin of milk, which scarcely satisfied me; and went again into the garden to examine the walls. This garden, which was very small, was connected with the room by a narrow passage going into it between two high buildings which looked like stables; be they what they might, however, no window looked my way from them, they turned their backs upon me and helped me in no other way than to make my prison the more secure. At this place I staid till it was night, sometimes wandering about the garden, and sometimes returning to my room. I saw nobody all day, except an ill-looking woman who brought me some cold meats and some wine, from whom I could not by any means get one word. I shall never forget her face, however, though I was not like to remember her voice, or any other voice on this pleasant journey. The horses snorted sometimes, but every other animal about me was as silent as death. I tried every way I could devise to get upon the top of the garden wall, but in vain. At last I gave up all in despair, and set myself down in my room, expecting and wondering what next might happen. I laid all to the charge of my unlucky face and form, and was vain enough to think that my person was the object of my banditti. If they had any evil design upon that, no place in the world was more suited to it than that in which I now was, which, as far as I could discover, seemed to be a lone house in the middle of some great wood, where fifty murders might be committed and the world none the wiser.

I ate some cold meat for my dinner, which I pulled to pieces with my teeth and my fingers, for I had neither knife nor fork allowed me—it was ready cut into slices, however, and gave me little trouble. When

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it began to grow dark I expected to see the light no more; for in this place I felt a strong persuasion that whatever was intended to be done would be executed. I prepared myself for death, for I was determined to die sooner than be dishonoured. My intention was, as soon as I found their design, to seize one of their pistols and shoot myself through the heart. In the midst of these my meditations it grew quite dark, I suddenly heard a carriage drive to the house, when, after the same ceremonies as before, I went quietly into it, and was again driven away. The next time we stopped to change horses, I was not suffered to get out; I was a little distressed at this, but bore it as well as I could. The next stage we stopped at what appeared to be a lodge at some park gate, for I was suffered to get out here, and was put into a room, locked into it, and left to my meditations; and, if silence gave them any furtherance, I had enough of that, for much pains seemed to be taken to keep every thing very quiet; and if Mr. Grove himself had run away with me, things could not have been more still.

Mr. Grove smiled.

In short, matters were carried on in so strange a way that my curiosity almost equalled my fears. Hitherto I had not heard so much as a whisper. All was done by signs, and in deep silence, which had something inexpressibly terrible in it. I now began to examine my room. There was one window in it, and though scarcely large enough to let a cat out, it had crossbars of iron in it. I took a chair and looked out at it, for it was high in the wall, and got a sight of the outside of my carriage. It was green, and on the panel the letter F. was put, surmounted with a death's head held in a

man's hand. The carriage was richly ornamented with silver, and looked to be very new. That moment my little window was blinded on the outside, and I could see no more. In this small room I found every thing I wanted, not to omit some very fine ham and a chicken ready cut up, and a bottle of excellent madeira. I ate some supper, and drank four glasses of the wine, which put me into better spirits than I had yet felt myself. After an hour I obeyed the summons, and was put into the carriage for the last time.

Three hours and a half elapsed, when the carriage again stopped; upon the door being opened, I found myself at the mouth of a long passage, it was lighted by some lamps which hung on the walls, and seemed to descend; the appearance of it gave me great alarm. The usual sign being made for me to get out I refused, and said I would not get out: when the opposite door of the carriage was unlocked, upon which some pushed and some pulled, and soon got me into the passage. Here I began to contend with my gang, and stood my ground in an unaccountable manner against three or four of them for some time, but as the passage lay upon a descent, it was all up hill work for me to struggle against so many who had the upper ground. I was forced to give way, and down I was compelled to go, some pushing, and some pulling until we came to a door; they then tied a bandage over my eyes, and, opening the door, which, being a heavy one, made a great noise,—in I was pushed at one general effort, and the door closed upon me.

I sunk down on the ground, where I lay for some time with scarce any sense. All around me was a deep silence; I had forgot my bandage, and thought I was

left in the dark, but, coming to my senses, I soon recollected the cause of my darkness, and pulled off the handkerchief which tied my head, when I was not a little astonished to find myself in a good room with a bright fire in it, and some wax candles burning on a table. I stared all around me as I sat on the floor, when the window curtains, which were of scarlet cloth, caught my attention, and, as my liberty was always uppermost in my thoughts, and the least prospect of it roused me in a moment; I leaped up from off the floor upon which I was sitting, and ran to the curtains, but, upon pulling one of them aside, how great was my vexation and astonishment to find no window behind it! I looked behind the other, when the same wall presented itself which encompassed me on all sides! This fixed me for some time in amazement. I then recollected the great descent which fell shelving down to this place, and it came to my thoughts that I must be under ground! Terrified at this imagination I felt a chill run through me, as if cold water instead of warm blood had run through my veins. Recovering from this stroke of terror which had benumbed me for an instant, I began to examine the other parts of the room, in which every thing was provided for my comfort and convenience except a way to get out of it. To come to particulars, there were several sorts of meats and wines placed upon a sideboard, which, upon raising a fine table-cloth, I found to be made of white marble, and hung to the wall by two brass chains. My guardians seemed to have much feeling for my stomach, for hitherto I had always plenty to eat and drink. The chairs, which were very handsome ones, were ornamented with cushions of scarlet cloth, there was a sofa too furnished

in the same manner, and in one corner of the apartment stood an harpischord, and there was a little table covered with music books put near it. A brass triangle of lamps hung by a scarlet cord from the ceiling, which was as white as snow; these, adding their little fires to the candles, aided by the reflection of the ceiling, gave a great deal of light. There was a good carpet on the floor that covered it entirely, which, upon lifting up one corner of it, I found to be paved with bricks. Every thing about the fireplace was very neat, indeed magnificent, it was decorated with a marble mantle-piece, richly embellished with the rape of Proserpine, its plinths and side-pieces hung with fruits and flowers. I looked into every corner of the room, which was rather large, like a bird that, just caught and put into a cage, looks all its wires over; I came to the door last, for I very little expected that it would be any thing like a door to me, for I as much looked to walk through one of the walls. I put forth my hand to the lock, however, like one who holds out a hand for unexpected charity, and found it open, but there was another beyond it, which gave me much comfort, for I was not like to have my house broken open as long as such a vast block of wood and iron stood in the way. I turned from it like one perfectly satisfied, and, casting my eyes another way, a green curtain, which I had not taken much notice of before, caught my attention. I went to it, and drawing it aside, for it ran on rings and a rod, found another door, which, upon opening it, presented me with a dark room. I started back, not knowing what it might contain, and fancied I heard a noise in it. I felt a sensation in my head just as if my hair moved; running to the table, how-

ever, and taking one of the candles which stood upon it, I returned to this door, and held out the candle as far as I could reach into the room, to see what was in it.

Opposite to the door stood a bed, which, being of white furniture, was the more readily seen; the curtains were closely drawn, and what it might contain I could not tell. "Is any one there?" said I, three times over, raising my voice each time still higher: but nobody answered me, and, not having heard the sound of any voice but my own for so long a time, I should have been frightened out of my wits at the voice of a cat. But, it seems, I was the most like a cat of any thing there, being the only living creature in the place. Having sent my voice first, I followed it, and found a very well furnished bed-room, with every thing I could want in it; this was a new source of entertainment, and I amused myself with poking my nose into every corner of it. I here found a bed all ready prepared for one to get into it, and, putting my hand into it, found it to have been lately warmed, and, tired as I was, not having been in a bed for so long a time, I was very much tempted to jump into it: first of all, however, I was determined to re-examine every place and thing, in both the rooms, before I ventured to take any rest. I had already so well looked over every thing in the first room that I found nothing new in that, but in the bed-room two things had escaped me: one was the, I was going to call it window curtain, but that would be to give it a wrong name, for, upon my pulling it aside, I found no window there. The other was a little door which I espied in one corner concealed behind another little curtain, I ran to it, and opened it, and

found a little closet.* Having now gone twice over every thing, I took the triangular lamp off its hooks, and brought it, and the two wax candles, which were in the outer apartment, into my bed-chamber, and bolting my door, for there were two strong bolts on it, I had the courage, after a good deal of listening and searching, to undress myself and get into the bed, which was a very comfortable one. But I found it quite impossible to get to sleep for a long space.

There is a time, however, when the necessities of nature carry the day against all disturbances of thought, and the old gentlewoman at last made a conquest of me and put me to sleep as a nurse serves a baby. I slept very soundly for some hours, and awoke with a great start, that almost danced me out of my bed; nothing could be more dark before light was created than the place in which I was, for the lamp, and the candles, which I left burning in my room when I went to bed, were all gone out; nor could any place be more still—I could hear my heart beat, which it did at that time very much. I composed myself as well as I could, and fell into a variety of reflections upon my very extraordinary situation. Who on earth can it be, said I to myself, that has thought me worth stealing? Can it be for love, or for revenge? But how can it be for either? As to those contemptible things that have professed love to me without knowing what it was, they have long since had reasons enough to be satisfied with my answers, and I as good reasons to think so. I was talking away to myself as fast as a parrot, when, all on a sudden, I heard a noise in the next room. I leaped

* Genevieve told the ladies, in the drawing-room, that it was a water-closet.

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out of bed and began to search for my clothes, but was in such a fuss that I scarce knew what I did—the darkness of my room was so great, that if I had been shut up in the centre of the earth, light could not have been more completely shut out.

I was forced to return to my bed to compose myself, and recollect where I put my clothes. I lay trembling for some time, but the noise not being repeated, I took a little heart, and, remembering at last where I undressed myself, I made shift to put my clothes on in the dark, and poking out my way to the door, perceived a little glimmer of light at the bottom of it. I stood still and listened for a long time: hearing no noise, I ventured to unbolt the bolts and open the door gently, when the first thing I discovered was that the curtain had been drawn over it, a thing which I knew that I had not done myself. This convinced me that somebody must have been in the next room to do this, but I was not long before I had proofs enough of it, for candles had been brought into it, a table with all matters for breakfast set ready, a good fire made, and nothing was wanted but some person to come with a good appetite and sit down to breakfast in it. All these things I discovered, peeping from behind the curtain, which had been made to conceal the door of the bedroom. I put my head further and further by degrees, until I could see into every part of the room, convinced by my own senses that nobody was in it, unless concealed behind the curtains, which seemed put there for no other reason than to hide the want of windows. I ventured out, and was glad to get to the fire, for I felt cold, and should have been glad of a hat which I lost, I knew not how, in some of my skirmishes.

After I had well warmed myself, and I was not a little surprised at being so cold in the middle of summer, I turned to the table so hospitably provided for me, and took some coffee and some bread and butter; and might have taken poison for any thing I knew. However, all was very good, and I must confess that I felt hungry. I then arose, and paced backwards and forwards in my room, expecting what might come next, and wishing much to see something in the human shape, when, all on a sudden, I was surprised with another noise. It was the fall of something like a heavy chain at the door, which I heard unlocked, and, presently, a woman came in as tall and as large as myself, but not so handsome (said Genevieve, laughing) for of all human countenances I had ever seen, even in pictures where devils and goblins are drawn, I never saw one so hideous. The moment she came in I ran up to her, and, seizing her fast by the arm, "Tell me, this moment," said I, in a loud voice, "where I am, and by whose orders put into this place?"

The woman was speechless; upon which I seized her with both my hands and dragged her towards the candles with a force she could by no means, though she attempted it, withstand, and, staring in her eyes, told her, I would make her use her tongue if she had such a thing in her head, and gave her a shaking which made her teeth chatter. The ugly toad, finding herself in the hands of her mistress, for she had not strength enough to contend with me, bawled out for help, and that was the first human voice which I had heard, except my own, since my strange journey from Oaken Grove. I told her she might bawl her heart out, for I did not value my life at a farthing, and would shake

her limbs all about the room if she refused to answer me a single question; upon which she opened her horrible mouth, and made signs for me to look into it, which I did with a candle, and saw her tongue was cut out at its root. I was now perfectly satisfied with her reason for not speaking, and, upon her dropping down on her knees, released her from my grasp. Shocked at what I had seen, I threw myself on the sofa and let the woman go where she would. It was some time, I confess, before I recovered myself after so horrid a sight, and it gave me a more dreadful idea of my situation than any that I had yet formed: "Into the hands of what barbarous monsters am I fallen!" said I. "What am I to expect?"

I leaped off the sofa to look for the woman, but she was gone. I presently heard a noise in my bed-chamber. I ran into it and found her there; she had come, it seemed, to put my apartment in order. The first question I asked her, was, if she could write? She shook her head, I made signs of talking on the fingers. She shook her head again. I felt my spirits roused in a very extraordinary manner, and was determined to make an attempt at leaving the room with her, though it might cost me my tongue! Upon a little consideration, however, for I had luckily time for it, while the woman made my bed, and was engaged in other domestic matters, I thought I had best be quiet, for what could I do? What could even an armed man have done in my situation? I thought it would be the best policy not to offend those whom I could not conquer; for to show one's courage where one is sure to get the worst of it, is acting like a fool. It is just to shew that one is not afraid to be beaten, and that were the best

of it. I took no further notice of the woman, whom I pitied very much, for I took it in my head that they had cut her tongue out on purpose to qualify her to wait upon me. I was in a strange place, so it was no wonder that I took strange things into my head. I came to the resolution, as long as no injury was offered to my person, to take all patiently.

The woman presently came out of my bed-room, and, opening a large basket which she brought, and which I felt some curiosity to examine, took out some wax candles and put them into silver candlesticks, and set them ready on the side-table, if I might want them, for I began to find I was to live by candlelight, and give up my share of the sun to others. Having done everything which she came to do, the woman came to the table where I sat leaning my head upon my hand, and put a piece of paper before me and an inkstand, and made some signs which I did not at all understand, when she pointed to my gown, which was very much torn and stained, and, by an action which I could not mistake, I found that I was to give orders in writing if I wanted it repaired or cleaned, which I did, and the woman showed signs of being satisfied. She took it, and in a few hours returned with it washed and mended. I soon found that this was to be the way to make my wants known, and I had many. I had no clothes but what I had upon my back, and those but ill suited to my present situation, for they were my wedding clothes, and I could not look at any part of my dress without tears.

When the woman returned with my gown I pointed at the inkstand, she brought it and some paper. I wrote down "A Bible and a prayer-book." She soon

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brought them, and, as they were quite new, and a bill came with them, I found that I could not be far from some town or village. By the bill I was given to understand that I must pay for what I wanted. This put a thing into my head which had not been there before, it was to see what money I had in my purse, upon which I began to count my money, and found I had no more than ten pounds in my pocket. It was not long before great part of this money was gone to buy me things which I could not do without, though I attired myself like a plain village girl, and made many things with my own two hands, such as gowns, petticoats, &c. After I had furnished myself with every thing I wanted about my person, and paid my bills, a thought came into my head which, if it had come before, would have come in better time. It was, that if by any stratagem I could get out of my prison, I should want the means to fly, for how could I get on without money? Now, by the time I was coming to this place, and the rate I came at, I could not be less than a hundred and fifty miles from home. I consoled myself, however, as well as I could, and thought if I could but once get out of my gaol, I should want neither meat, drink, nor sleep, but live upon joy alone. As the journal of one day will very well serve for no less a time than five months, for much variety could not be expected in the narrow circuit in which I was to act, I will first give it to you, and then proceed to scenes dreadful and shocking to be told and heard.

(Genevieve was proceeding, when Old Crab interrupted her, and asked her if the scoundrels had committed any brutal act?)

I will set you at rest as to that (said she) in a

very short time, but I think my story will lose its interest if I tell you any thing out of its place. Romances (continued she) were never much to my taste, and I now feel myself so much like the heroine of a novel, that I can scarcely bear the thought of it. To come to my journal: I rose at eight in the morning, said my prayers, and read the psalms and lessons for the day; I then sat down to my breakfast, after which I walked two hours, with my watch in my hand, as fast as I could pace it, setting my bed-room door open, and making a long walk from the utmost corner of one room to the furthest corner of the other, in which the position of the rooms favoured me. I then sat down to my work, if I had any to do, and sometimes amused myself by writing notes to the master of the house, at one time full of complaints, at another of petitions, at another of thanks for my good usage, at another of threats, setting the dangers in which they stood who had taken me away by force from my friends, in every light I could. Of this, however, I, after a time, grew tired enough, for all I could write was disregarded.

The outside door of my prison, amongst other safeguards, was fastened, as I think I have said, with a heavy chain. This chain usually fell three times, sometimes four times a-day, which always gave notice when my *dumb-waiter* was coming. It always fell at four o'clock, when my dinner was brought me, which was very good; and my table was decorated with a variety of silver things. A dessert followed my dinner, served in the neatest manner, and two sorts of wines. At eight I took my tea and coffee with some bread and butter, which was my last meal. I then read the evening psalms and lessons, said my prayers, and after an

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hour's walk, went to bed. I meditated a great deal, and, indeed, had little to interrupt my meditations. I was strongly persuaded that I had but a short time to live, in which sad thought one thing gave me much comfort; it was, that I had made my will and left all I was worth in the world to one who was worth to me more than that and all the world, my dearest dear Acerbus, a few bequests to my kind friends excepted—this, I say, gave me much comfort. If any violence should be offered my person, I was determined to die, and had concealed a pointed knife in a case made to hold it in my bosom, with which I was resolved to stab myself to the heart sooner than live to be dishonoured: and had argued myself into a persuasion that it were lawful. From the very kind treatment I met with, and the care that was taken of me, and of my beauty too (for I had every sort of thing on my toilette and in my bed-room to make me handsome and to keep me so) I took an idea that I were like a pig, or a chicken, that is put up in a cage to be fatted, when the more care is taken of it the nearer it is to its destruction.

Day after day, night after night passed on with nothing to distinguish them but the same recurrences; my time ran just like a wheel, in the whirl of which the same things still return and still depart. I continued in good health, after the first month, when the agitation of my mind disordered me a good deal at times, during which every care of me was shewn. Strange, indeed, it may appear, but true it is, that no less than five months passed before I met with any interruption to my matters, and my curiosity began to be the most troublesome thing that I had to deal with. It was soon to be satisfied, however.

One morning, after my breakfast, I was sitting at my table and reading the psalms and lessons for the day,—which, though it was a thing I never missed, yet I sometimes said my prayers only before my breakfast, and read the service for the day afterwards,—I was sitting at my table thus engaged, when I was surprised to hear the chain fall at so unusual a time, for the woman had but just made my bed and swept my apartments, leaving me, as usual, to my solitude. Well, the inside door was opened, and in came a man with a mask upon his face, wrapped from head to foot in a sort of military cloak. I leaped up from my chair at such an unexpected, and so new a sight, and attempted to speak, but felt as if something stuck in my throat like a ball!

“Sit down,” said he, in a voice I was well acquainted with; and although there was nothing terrific, either in the words or the manner in which they were uttered, the sound of a voice, after so long a silence, had a strange effect upon me. I trembled, and tried to conceal it, and waited with impatience for what further he might have to say. “I am come to beg that for another which he can take without the asking for;” said he, “and will take the sooner, if refused.”

“Speak out,” said I, in a loud voice—“say what you would have of me!”

“No fury,” said he, “no storm, it will but aggravate your sentence.”

“Sentence!” said I; “how dare you, be you who you may, how dare you sentence me?”

I felt my courage sufficient, at that instant, to have plunged my weapon into my heart, and searched my bosom to know if it was in its place; it was, and it

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added to my courage to find it there. I arose from my seat, and took a few steps in my room; the man was silent, as if confounded by my voice and demeanour. When, turning to me, as I walked towards the door, without any intention to go out at it:

“You had best stand your ground, madam,” said he, “for the moment you offer to go out of this room you will be shot dead.”

I laughed aloud:—“Death,” said I, “is what I want, and should be glad of it if I could get it.”

“I know your spirit, madam, but have no mind to gratify you in the humour I am in.” I heard the chain put up, and we were both shut in.

“I neither care for what your humour is, nor what you are,” said I, “I demand my liberty; it is a thing which no power on earth has a right to rob an unoffending creature of—what have I done to be imprisoned thus? Name my crime!—who are you? show your face, if you are not ashamed to show it;—no honest man hides that behind a mask which he can wear with honour—a bad man’s face is one of the worst things he has about him, and that is the reason why he is fain to hide what he cannot get rid of; it is one of those marks his guilt is known by. Who are you? Have you a name? Or are you as much ashamed of that as of your face? Come, be a brave villain, be you what you may, don’t be ashamed of your profession, to be ashamed is to be a coward—who are you, I say? I will know who you are, your voice is no stranger to me; unmask, sir, or I will unmask you?” saying which, I snatched away his mask, and whom do you think it concealed?—my cousin Frederick!

If the devil had been in the room I could have de-

scribed my feelings. But I can no more do that now than I could speak then, for I could scarce breathe, much less speak; I panted as if I had run myself out of breath. He took the advantage of it, and, to give him his due, he had made several attempts to speak before, but I talked so fast, and so loud, that he could not get in one word. He took the advantage of my want of breath, and said, "You had best be quiet, Genevieve, it will make the most for your advantage; you are as much in my power as anything can be that either is, or ever was, subject to the will of man. I came masked for your benefit, and for none of those saucy reasons which you have had the temerity to object to me, that I might have a plea to take the less offence [at what you might say, as one that did not hear it; I came not as myself, but as a messenger from myself to make a demand, which, by this rash act of yours, you will make more severe—I can take what I want, but had rather take it at your hands than by force."

"Get out of my sight," said I, "for I had rather be shot in the eyes than see you!"

His attempt upon my dear husband's life and my person came into my head like an arrow the moment I saw his face.

"I demand," said he, "your person and your fortune."

"I would destroy both before you should have either," said I, "if I had them to give, but I have not—I am a married woman."

"It is false," said he; "I know you were to be, but know you are not. Submit—come a volunteer or I will press you into the service."

"Press!—yes, you have a press-gang at hand, but I neither fear you nor it—I will not submit!—Lock your

doors as you may, I have a key that will set me at liberty. So I, in my turn, can take what I want, but had rather take it at your hands than by force. I demand my liberty."

"Take it," said he, with a sneer—"but, in the meantime, we will see what can be done—there are pens, ink and paper—send me a note when you have changed your mind;" saying which he left the room.

I had a reply ready, but he would not stay to hear it. This is not only the substance of our conversation, but, I believe, nearly every word that passed, for I had time enough to reflect upon it after he was gone and to fix it in my mind. But what amazed me the most was, that I had never seen or heard from him before this time, some reason there certainly must be for so long a silence, but what it was I could not guess. I formed a variety of conjectures upon this, which, perhaps, are not much to the present purpose, or like to be of much interest. Soon after he was gone the chain fell again. "What! more company!" said I to myself, and few people ever talked more to themselves than I did, which shows that a woman's tongue must needs be running at all events; upon which another man made his appearance, and though he was one of the most ill-looking fellows I almost ever saw, the wretch he came after made a handsome man of one whom Nature had taken a great deal of pains to make hideous. We stared at each other, but neither of us spoke a word. His errand was to take away all my wax candles and put worse in their places. I looked upon this as a mean piece of malice, and took no further notice of it at that time, not knowing to what play it was the prologue.

Nothing broke the usual current of events until the

next morning, when at the same time the same man who took away my wax candles, came again and took away one of the glasses which served to adorn my room. The day after he came again and took away the other, for there were two. At first I thought this man was to serve me as a footman, and that I was to have two servants instead of one, though I was not very conscious of having done much to deserve any such mark of favour, but I soon found to my cost that his services put nothing to my comforts, for every time he made his appearance he was sure to take one or another away. Every time he came he was sure to carry some piece of furniture out of my rooms—chair after chair, and table after table; for, to make the thing the more vexatious, he never took more than one thing at a time, chair after chair, and table after table, disappeared, until at last I had neither one nor the other left me; when every moveable thing except my bed was taken from me, which served as well for table and for chair, but I had no great reason to expect that it would serve me long in any way. The next object of my robber's attention was my carpets, which he took first from my parlour, and then from my bed-chamber, for the floors of both were covered with very good ones; this piece of malice left me upon a cold brick pavement.

When the rogue came next he brought a sort of bench with him; and took down one curtain a day until all were gone. He was so good as to leave the bench which served me for a seat and a table. Instead of good candles I had now very bad ones, rush-lights only, whose feeble light made my disfurnished apartments look very dismal! This usage was bad enough, but it

was not the worst, for I had some reason to think that I was to be starved to death, and that, to make it the more terrible, by little and little, for my table was robbed of somewhat every day, till I was at last reduced to bread and water.

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CHAPTER XII

Genevieve's Narrative continued

It would make too long a story to come to particulars, but I could not but admire the ingenuity of my tormentor. I had several written messages sent me from the villain who kept me under his key, calling upon me to yield, and those at such times when some more cruel privation than others vexed me most. I had two things to choose out of, death or dishonour, and my choice took not one moment's consideration. I therefore prepared myself the best I could to die. The saddest part of my existence was my sleep, for then my fancy brought all my dearest friends before my view, but the scene was always tragic, often dreadful. Some days had now passed, since my plunderer had made me a visit, when he came again and took off the lock and bolts from the door of my bed-room and carried them away; this business took him three days, for there was a lock and two bolts, one of which he took away at a time. After this I went to bed no more, but took a little sleep at times in my clothes, out of which I always started in some shocking agony. The last time he came he committed a robbery on my person—he seized my watch as I held it in my hand. I struggled for it, in which scuffle I got a hurt on my left breast with the man's elbow, this put me into a rage, I flung him on the ground with all my strength,

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and cut his head. He, finding himself unable to manage me, took a bell out of his pocket, and rung it for assistance. I heard a noise of some one at the door, and resigned my repeater, sorely against my will. This man I saw no more; but another, little better than an animated flint, took his place. The first time I had the honour to see the one who succeeded him, he came and took hold of my clothes, as if he had a mind to undress me, he soon found that was not like to be an easy matter, but I afterwards thought that he only wanted to take my gown, for, leaving me, he went into my bed-room and took away one which lay on my bed.

After this, the woman, who did a variety of little domestic offices for me, and seemed the kindest of those human creatures with whom I had now to deal, coming out of my bed-room, was seized by the arm and pulled out of the room, and I saw her no more. The man waited upon me afterwards, and the next morning he entered upon his office; he brought my breakfast and my dinner at the same time, and set it down on the bench or form, which the other man had left through forgetfulness perhaps, for I could not ascribe it to good-nature. He then marched into my bed-room, but found that I had saved him all trouble there, for what the woman used to do for me in it, I took care to do myself. As soon as the man was gone, an accident happened, and one sufficiently vexatious; I had eaten some bread and drunk some cold water for my breakfast, when, getting up from my form where I sat to my meal, I had the ill luck to throw down my rush candle, and was left in total darkness, for my fire, which I always neglected, was gone out; indeed, though well served, I expected to be deprived of it, so I used my-

self to do without it. I felt my way to the door, and knocked and kicked till I was tired at it, and then felt my way to my bed, upon which I threw myself, and burst into tears. I knew I had little chance of any light for four-and-twenty hours, for all the poor pittance of food that I was allowed, was brought in all at once and left to me to eat it when my stomach served for it. My tears never got the better of me so much before—I reasoned and argued with myself in vain; I was fain to think heaven had forgot me, and left me to despair. I wept for two hours, I think, if not more, ere I could rouse myself, when an odd sensation in my head frightened me, for I thought I was going mad. I leaped off my bed, and feeling my way into the other room, got to one of the longest of the four walls, and began to walk backwards and forwards, feeling my way with one hand; there was no fear, I thought, of falling over the furniture; so after a little, by counting my steps from end to end, I paced away with that sort of confidence which one gets by finding no danger. Of all things which I lost, I regretted the loss of my repeater as much as any: it was a great comfort to know how the time went in the world, though I was like to see it no more.

Getting bolder and bolder in my walk, I, by some accident, deviated so far from a straight line as to fall over my form, and threw my dinner off it; and what was worse, spilled all the water which was set upon it, and before the next morning was almost choked with thirst, for, to my no small mortification and distress, I was allowed no other water to wash myself, than what little I could save at my meals. I grew hungry, and indeed I was seldom otherwise, for I was kept very

short, I grew hungry about my usual dinner time, and was forced to feel about upon the dirty floor for the bread and meat which had been brought me, and was glad to eat them when I found them, dirty as they were, like a dog in a kennel. As for the bit of bread which I had left at my last meal for my dinner, I thought I must have given it up, but as luck would have it, after sprawling and crawling about the floor for half an hour, I found it, and gnawed it to pieces, like a hungry wolf.

It would make my story too long to piece in moral hints and reflections, but I could not help thinking that I was come to a very good school, and should carry away some excellent lessons, if I ever should have the luck to get out of it. The losing of my furniture, piece by piece, put me very much in mind of what happens to every one who lives long in the world; friend after friend, comfort after comfort is taken from him, until the man, grown old, with scarcely one muscle left to move him, or a limb to support his body, falls into his grave. If my friends above ground, thought I, have nothing on earth which they can keep, they are, so far, very little better off than I; for whether they go out of the world, or I out of my dungeon, the luggage which we shall be allowed to take with us will scarce be a pin the more.

But to proceed: Having in some little degree satisfied my appetite with the dirty meat and bread which I found on the floor,—and, though the meat was very gritty with filth which it licked up, I was glad to eat it, and could have eaten more if I could have found any,—I felt out my way back to my bed, and, the cravings of hunger being a little allayed, I fell asleep notwithstanding—

ing my thirst. How long I slept I could not say, but I think a great while. I awoke, however, as I often did, screaming with all my strength, for my poor brains always ran upon some violence, some dreadful assault which one time or other I must needs expect. This exertion gave me an acute pain in my breast for several hours; it went off, however, at last, and I felt no more of it. I now left my bed, indeed I had leaped off it before I was well awake, for I dreamed that Frederick, with half a dozen more, had overpowered me and were tearing off my clothes—the struggles in my sleep must have been excessive, for when I awoke I was extremely hot, and my thirst so much increased that I expected to die of it, when I heard the chain fall. Seeing the light, I ran out of my room, for the least was a great light to me who had been so many hours shut up in the deepest darkness; but when the candle itself which the man brought with him, met my sight, I could not have been more dazzled if he had held a comet in his hand. He brought with him a pitcher of water and half a loaf of bread. I seized the pitcher in so wild a manner as to make the man start, and put it to my mouth with such eagerness that it rattled against my teeth. Having satisfied my thirst, I pointed to the bench, which lay overturned, the broken cup, and the wet places on the floor, which were not like to get dry in a hurry, and telling the man what accident had happened, begged for a double allowance of water to make me amends. I said that I had been at least four-and-twenty hours without any thing to drink. To this I had no answer. I stared in the man's face to look if he pitied me, but found no pity in it. The wise, perhaps, may think it better not to have it, than to show it and

not have it, but to have it and not show it may be better thrift.

This was the first day that I was reduced to bread and water, and the first day, too, that I was left to light my own fire; a sack of coals was brought and poured out upon the floor, and a fagot thrown to me, and I left to make the best of them. The man then put down my bread upon my bench, and three rush candles, my usual allowance, by the side of it, and went away. I was now rich in candles, for, not having burned my last allowance, two whole ones and a half, which I took care to conceal, remained. So my accident, the throwing down my candle I mean, turned out to my benefit; but I had not one comfort upon which I could reckon a straw, my life itself was in the hands of a man whose intention it seemed to be to destroy it by degrees, to make me feel his vengeance and my death the more. Having now the benefit of a light, I took my Bible and prayer book, and read the morning service for the day; I then took my bread, and, giving thanks for it, ate a piece of it, but with less appetite than usual, for, though I was very hungry before I drank the water, my appetite seemed to be drowned in the quantity of it which I swallowed. Well, said I, there will be the more for my dinner, and as to my appetite, I am glad to have it a little quiet, for it used to be very troublesome.

I had now been kept upon bread and water for seven days, during which time every thing had been taken out of my bed-room except the bed and its furniture, and a great chest, for, on the seventh day, I had not so much as a basin left me, so that if my face and hands wanted washing it was no fault of mine, and I could

but ill spare any of the water which was allowed me. Indeed, I was so thirsty that I usually drank it all, and it was often none of the cleanest. I had long since found it to be of no use to ask for any thing, or to complain of any thing, or find fault with any thing, a sullen silence was my answer; so I, in my turn, took things as they came in silence. I had now been three weeks without any change of clothes, except the change of one dirty thing for another. I could no longer get any thing washed for me, or even water to wash any thing for myself, which I would gladly have done. I began to grow loathsome to myself, and expected, if nothing else, that some wretched disease would soon put an end to me. Violent fits of grief and rage took their turns with me; I began to grow desperate, and I was coming fast to a resolution to lose my life in an attempt at an escape. I went so far as to plan several. I have said that I had a knife concealed in my bosom; it was one which had been dropped in the room and left; for, during the first part of my imprisonment, when my meals were served with elegance and luxury, knives were brought and this, which was worn very sharp at its point, and made more so by my whetting it on the walls, was one of them; it was a common table-knife, with a silver haft, and nearly a foot in length, haft and all. This knife, which I often drew from the sheath that I had made for it in my bosom, and called it the key of my prison, was to be the chief instrument in my most favourite plan, it was—see what thoughts despair suggests!—To stab the fellow who attended me, and then rush out, for the doors were left open so long as he staid, and serve the next I met the same, and, if overpowered, die fighting for my liberty; for I saw

that I must either die where I was, or live a life by far worse than death.

“Is not life worth risking life for?” I would ask, for I talked whole hours together to myself. “I am now in good health, my strength unimpaired, given me no doubt for great exertions, or to what end had I so much? A weak heart makes a weak arm; they shall see what I can do and what I dare to do.”

In the midst of these disturbances of thought, my jailer came in to bring me my bread and water and my rush candles. My heart failed me sufficiently at the sight of him to keep me quiet. I sat still upon my bench, and fixed my eyes upon him in so fierce a manner as to check his pace a little as he approached me. I saw this, and, lest he should suspect any thing which it stood me much upon to prevent, I walked away into the other room and left him; yet, when he stooped down to put my bread and water on the bench, I had a fine opportunity to have despatched him, for his left side lay open to my right hand; but my mind was not sufficiently bent. I found this, and walked away, for I would not do the thing by halves. When I returned to my bread and water, I started at the sight of a piece of paper, which lay by them on the bench, I snatched it up; it contained the following words:—

I once more, and for the last time, demand your person and your fortune. Your consent gives you your liberty, and makes you mistress of my house. Your refusal brings upon you the worst thing that a woman can suffer. Four and twenty hours are allowed for your answer.

FREDERICK.

“Now,” said I to myself, “I am resolved—this is the

spur wanted." I took some paper and a pen, which was left me, and wrote as follows:—

I have no power to give to another that thing which is not my own. My person is my husband's, and my fortune is given away by will. But if both were in my power, much as I may be in yours, I tell you to your head, that I would die before you should come possessed of either—do your worst!

GENEVIEVE DECASTRO.

My mind was now fixed, and, odd as it may seem, I felt more comfort and more ease than I had yet known since I had been in the power of this monster. I read the morning and evening services, ate and drunk all my bread and water, threw myself on my bed, and slept sweetly and without disturbance. But as soon as I awoke, the sense of my dreadful situation rushed on my mind, my heart sunk, and I wept bitterly. Hearing a noise in the next room, I leaped off my bed, for I had slept in my clothes for a month, and went into it. My jailer had been there and was gone, and, leaving my allowance as usual, had taken my note with him. A cold chill ran through me, and I felt like one condemned to die. Feeling in my bosom I missed my knife! "Surely," said I, "the fellow must have come and taken it while I slept!" for having had but little sleep of late I had slept as one dead. I ran back, frantic, I may truly say, to my bed, and rejoiced as much to find my weapon as if I had already cut a passage with it through all my enemies! I kissed it so eagerly that I cut my face with it—but did not know it until the blood dropped upon my bread, which lay on the bench over which I stood.

Presently the chain fell, and the door was opened,

when two men brought in a strange wooden engine, formed like a St. Andrew's cross. They set it down, and went away. Curiosity soon brought me to it. The beams of the cross were very thick, and about eight feet in length, and strong straps with iron buckles were fastened to each of the four beams' ends. I started back from it with horror, for I saw in a moment I should be buckled down upon it and put to some torture. I fell on my knees and said I know not what, for my head seemed turned. I presently recovered a little, took my weapon out of my bosom, tried its point—put it up again,—sat down upon my bench, and trembled till I shook every thing upon it. I sat at least an hour, and, hearing no noise, I took heart a little. Feeling very empty, but not hungry, I broke my bread in two, when from under a piece of crust, which stood up hollow on the loaf, a piece of paper fell out upon the ground; I had like to have missed of it, for it was not an inch square, it caught my eye, however, and I picked it up, opened it, and found it contained the following words:—

Be upon your guard—this night at twelve o'clock you will be made a sacrifice; till then, your time is your own—make the best of it.— A FRIEND.

“Friend or enemy,” said I, “for I can scarce look for any friend here,—I will, at least, take your advice, and make the best of my time.”—The first I did was to kindle a fire, and, having made the best I could, I got rid of a great many things, I mean clothes, which I had put on to conceal, or I had been robbed of all that could be found, except a little bundle which I had the address to hide under the heap of coals in the corner

of my room, this I did that I might have as little incumbrance as possible, and no impediment to the exercise of all my strength. As soon as I had done this, I tied all up in a large handkerchief and put them in the corner next the door, which, as it opened into the room, I mean the inside door, would conceal the bundle by enclosing it in the corner. My limbs were now at their full liberty, and I kept myself warm by means of a grate fire. Now my bed-room I expected would be the first object of attack, I therefore had recourse to the following trick:—Above my bed-room door there was a large shelf, and upon this shelf was placed a very large iron chest of very great weight, heavy enough to knock a man down, or, indeed, two, if it fell on their heads. I fastened a piece of tape to a ring of the chest and the bed-room door, which, upon being opened, must inevitably pull the chest upon the heads of those who entered; for I set it as much as possible upon a balance, so that the least pull might bring it down. Having nothing but a poker to help me at this work, it took me two hours at least to move this mass of iron, by little and little, from the wall to the edge of the shelf, which I did with great difficulty, standing on my tiptoes on my form, and brought it at last on a balance to the border of the shelf; and in this I had like to meet with a sad accident, I was within a little of pulling it upon my own pate, and I was a long time before I could set it to my mind, for, being a very heavy thing, unless it beetled a good deal over the shelf it would not come down at any little pull. At last, by putting a large coal between the chest and the wall, I did the thing to admiration, for it hung so much upon the poise that I could have tipped it over with my little finger.

I now threaded the piece of tape through the key-hole of the door withinside, and guiding it over the top, shut the door close, and left the trap for the mouse.

Whether this thing might succeed or not, it at least engaged my mind while I was busy about it; and now I had nothing more to do but to finish the poor remains of my bread and water, and read the evening service for the day, in which I met with a psalm that suited very well with my case. As near as I could guess, it now wanted little more than an hour of the time when I was to expect my visitors. It is quite impossible to describe the horrors of my mind during this dreadful interval, I seemed to have the utmost difficulty to keep myself in my senses.

At last I even wished to hear the chain fall—and I quickly had my wish—I heard some little noise first, but as I had fancied a thousand times that I had heard a thousand, I took this for fancy too. I was for once mistaken—I heard voices at the outside of the doors, and, in a moment, the chain fell. I had some time since put the fire out, and kept one candle burning in my hand as I sat upon my bundle behind the door, which it was my intention to extinguish the moment the doors were opened. I blew out my candle in a moment, and stood up as close as it was possible for me to stand in the corner of the room, behind the door, with my knife in one hand and my bundle in the other. The door was now opened, and coming back upon me, concealed me completely behind it. I knew very well that this hiding place would not serve me long, but my plan was, if no opportunity offered for my escape during the confusion which the falling of the great chest might cause, to defend myself in this corner as long as

I had any life. Four or five men now entered. As soon as they came in I heard that monster, Frederick, who was the captain of the gang, speak these words:

“Now, gentlemen, let us rehearse our parts to see if every man be perfect: No. 1, you are the strongest fellow, you seize her right hand; No. 2, you seize her left; No. 3, you seize her right foot, and I will seize the other; then, when we have her fast, No. 4 must follow with the cross, and, while we hold her, strap and buckle her down upon it. Are ye all ready?”

Some sign I suppose was given, for I heard no answer. They went immediately to my bed-room, and, upon pushing open the door, down came the great chest, and, by the noise it made, must have knocked down at least two of them. The light was extinguished in a moment, and we were all left in total darkness.

“Every man stand his ground until I bring a light,” said one of them; “she cannot escape while the door is guarded—every man stand his ground.” The moment I heard him pass me, I rushed out after him with my bundle in one hand and my knife in the other, and followed him as well as I could in the dark a long way, but not knowing the road as well as he, I soon lost the sound of his footsteps, and was forced to poke out my way as well as I could by myself. In a few minutes I saw a flash of light at a distance, and, presently, Frederick himself coming with a candle. I advanced with a firm step to meet him, he saw me coming with my knife in my hand, lifted up ready for a stroke, when he drew a pistol from his pocket in a moment, and fired it at my head. I instantly leaped upon him, and plunged my knife into his bosom with all my might. He fell as it were dead at my foot in a second of time.

(When Genevieve came to this part of her story, both Mr. and Mrs. Decastro were very much affected by it, for they had cherished a hope that they should yet live to see Frederick's reformation, which hope having kept alive what little affection remained for him in their hearts, the dreadful intelligence of his being thus cut off in one of the most atrocious acts shocked them very much. Mr. and Mrs. Decastro left the room, when Genevieve thus went on with her story.)

I expected that the report of the pistol would soon bring all the gang about me, my escape was my object, which I knew must be made in a moment or not at all, I left my weapon in Frederick's body, for it was so wedged in between two of his ribs, and stuck so deep in him, that I could not get it out again, and, catching up a candle which lay burning on the ground, I ran along the passage until I came to a door which was bolted with four large bolts. These bolts were all rusted into their staples in such a manner that I could scarce push them back with all my strength, and when I had done it the door stuck to the posts so fast, that I was forced to take three or four good tugs at it, before it would come open. I saw another door on my right hand, but as that looked like one which led into some apartment, I thought it best not to meddle with it, for I had no mind at that time to look into any rooms, the other I was willing to think made best for my present purpose, for I was sure it was an outside one both by its thickness and the great bolts it had. I tore it open and rushed out in a moment, when my sensations were so excessive and so exquisite, that I had near come down upon the ground. The moon shone very bright, and showed me, what I could have been as glad not to

have seen, it was a wall which surrounded me on all sides; I ran to it, however, and, being very tall, I found I could just reach the top of it with my arms extended. I flung my bundle over it, and, with a world of scrambling, at last succeeded in getting one of my knees upon the ridge of it, the rest of my body soon followed, and over I jumped into a road. Hearing, at that moment, a great noise in the house behind me, I took to my heels, and ran till I fell breathless on the ground.

Having been so long shut up in a close place, the air which I now breathed had such an effect on my breast, that I fell a coughing for ten minutes. Recovering myself a little I caught up my bundle and off I set again as fast as I could run, whither I knew not, it was no matter, however, for I would have run into a wood full of lions to have got away from my prison. I soon found, to my cost, that this running would not do, and that I was making more haste than good speed, for I was soon forced to sit down again and pant, and lost more time in these stoppings than if I had kept up a good steady pace, which I could hold on with. While I was sitting upon my bundle, I heard the feet of horses coming at a distance. I tried to get through the hedge, but it was too thick, they came on at full gallop and were up with me in a few moments; I was terribly frightened, when one of the horsemen said, "Good night," to me, and away they went, without farther notice. At that minute, I heard some clock strike one, at a great distance, for it was a still night. To show signs of fear, is sometimes to show signs of guilt, it makes suspicions where none are thought of—if they had taken notice of the pucker I was in, and of my eagerness to get through the hedge, it would have been

enough to have made them think that I were not so good as I should be. They left me, however, to pursue my way unmolested. I kept up a steady pace on the road which I found, by a mile-stone I passed on it, to be some turnpike, but the moon getting a little clouded, I could not make out the letters, one or two excepted, which gave me no intelligence. I walked on, sometimes laughing and sometimes crying, and sometimes uttering thanksgivings for my escape, until the gray light appeared in the east, when, dropping my eyes upon my hands and clothes, I found them dyed with blood! I instantly left the high road, and wandered about in search of water, for if any had seen me in such a dreadful condition, I might have been taken up and carried to the first magistrate.

Coming to some wood, I heard at a little distance the tinkling of water—I entered it, and, following the noise, came to a little stream; here I sat down and washed my face and hands, and the fore part of my gown which had a river of blood running from the waist to the bottom of it. I got all this blood about me, in my attempt to recover my knife, the haft of which, being rather large, was so jammed in between Frederick's ribs, that after a tug or two, I was fain to leave it and make better use of my time: and when I came to reflect how long I was before I could get away, I was not a little astonished at not being overtaken, for it was impossible for the men, who were waiting for Frederick's return with a light, not to hear the report of his pistol. They punctually obeyed their captain's orders, however, and kept their posts, and there could not be better orders given for me, and I should have been to blame if I had not made the best of them. I was now

quite clean, and, taking a little turn, soon found the road which I had left, and held on until I saw a large village at a distance. I entered it, and walked into an inn, when a waiter very civilly showed me into a room with a bright fire in it, and asked me what I pleased to have for my breakfast.

I should make an endless story of it if I were to stop at every turn to portray my sensations, which were so exquisite at times that the tears fell apace into my bosom. The waiter, seeing my emotion, thought me ill, and asked me if he should bring me a glass of brandy; I said I had a little overwalked myself that morning and wanted my breakfast:

“Tea and hot rolls, madam?” said he.

“That will do,” said I, “bring them directly.” I sat down by the fire in a neat cheerful little room, and felt as if I should fall in a fit for joy! Presently my breakfast came, and I made the most delicious repast I ever made in my life! Having existed upon bread and water for so long a time, none but they who had fared as I had, and now fared as I did, could know what I felt. I had eat my breakfast, and not a little astonished the waiter at my appetite, before it came into my head that I was not in such very hospitable hands as I had been, where I was so generously fed and paid nothing for my victuals, but must now pay for what I had. This startled me, and I began to search my pockets for money. However, I luckily found enough to pay for my breakfast and to spare, for, upon pouring out my money into my lap, I counted out eighteen shillings and sixpence. I paid the man, and, telling him that I should sit a little to rest myself, he threw some coals upon my fire and left me.

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While I was putting my plans in order, and considering what I had best do, I heard a great talking in the passage coming to my room; I put my ear to the key-hole and heard one tell a story of some murder that had been committed in the night by a woman, and no two peas were ever more like each other than the picture he drew of the murderer and myself. Now as they had the copy I thought I had as good take care of the original, so I opened one of the windows, and, leaping into the garden, soon found means to make my escape. This imprudent step fixed a suspicion upon me, as I found afterwards, for I escaped but by the breadth of a hair. I ran to the garden-fence, which luckily was not so high as a church tower, and, throwing my bundle over, leaped after it, and got into the road which ran along the side of the garden. Presently I came to a turnpike gate, and was such a fool as to stop there to ask the man who kept it about the roads, for, naturally enough, I was eager to be put into the nearest way home. While I was in the house, some horsemen came to the gate, and, looking through the window, I was almost struck to the ground with the sight of the very man who attended me in my dungeon! I darted from the window in an instant, and was glad enough to hear them go off at full gallop, as soon as they had paid their way.

“Have you heard of the murder, madam?” said the turnpike man, coming into the house counting his money. I had the presence of mind to say that I had heard of it at the inn where I had just breakfasted. Now, if I had walked out at the door, like a gentlewoman, instead of jumping out at the window like a thief, I might as well have kept that to myself.

"What inn did you breakfast at, madam?" said he.

I saw my danger time enough to tell a lie, and said, I had breakfasted at the Red Lion, when I had in truth, breakfasted at the sign of the Cross.

"The very woman who committed the murder has just made her escape from the Cross, by jumping out at the window," said the man; "four men armed are, at this moment, gone through the gate in pursuit of her. Hand-bills, they said, were coming out to give particulars; she was a large handsome woman, and the story was, that she had stabbed her brother to the heart, with a case knife." I would have given the world to have been put into the moon at that moment, for the man looked me over in such a manner, that I could almost feel his eyes through my clothes. "She was just about your size," continued he, "and as handsome as you are; they said she was beautiful. Two hundred guineas reward is offered."

At that moment, others coming to the gate, just as he went out to take his toll, I wished him a good morning, without telling him so, and, while his attention was taken up in receiving and examining his money, I walked off into some fields which lay on one side of the road, and, concealing myself in a dry ditch, sat down upon my bundle to consider what had best be done. Though I might have been safe enough here, I still thought some other place safer. Seeing a wood a little way off, I went into it, and, getting into a very thick part of it, I sat down again to meditate further upon my matters. I recollected to have heard, at the inn, a very minute description of my dress; this put me upon examining my bundle to see what change I could make in it. Here I found, amongst other things, my wed-

ding clothes which I had on when I was forced away from the Rosary, my gown was a good deal too long for one in haste; I tacked it up, however, having a needle and some thread in my bundle, and, having changed my things, came out of the wood a much finer lady than I went into it. I was now clad in fine white muslin, instead of a stuff gown and petticoat, and had nothing about me except my hat, which by any the least means suited the description given of me at the inn. Coming into a path I met a farmer, who pulled off his hat and made me a fine bow. I asked him which way the path led? He told me, and I had the satisfaction to find that it took me on the way in which I would go. He stared a good deal at me, which compliment I could have been glad to have dispensed with. I thanked him for his information and walked away. Presently, I was a little surprised at his calling after me to ask if I would not wish to get into the Great North Road? I said I did. "This path will take you into it," said he. There could be no reason for his asking me this question, for I made him understand me before. I was sure it was done to get another stare at me. I now trotted on as fast as I could, for I felt myself upon very dangerous ground. I found that I was a long way from home, for the place of my confinement was upon the banks of the river Dee. Now a thousand schemes came into my head as I went singing on; for my present dangers, however great, weighed but lightly in my mind against those which I had escaped; and the thoughts of meeting my dearest husband, and all my dear friends again, though I had a long way to go, made me very joyful. A light heart and a good pair of legs carried me along at

a great pace, until at length I got into the road I was looking for.

I presently came to a little town, when the first thing which took my attention was a printed description of me stuck on a wall, with "Horrid Murder" at the top of it, and "Two Hundred Guineas Reward" in large red letters, suited in colour to the bloody matter. When one thinks oneself safe and finds oneself very much mistaken, it is no very pleasant discovery; I soon found it would not do to stop in this place as I had intended, for I wanted something to eat and to drink, having had a good deal of walking and no dinner. The great reward offered, and the little danger expected in taking a woman into custody, put every body on the look-out, and I found people very troublesome as I passed through this town.

"She has just such a hat," said one. "That is the very size and figure," said another, and the like; but I walked quietly on and took no notice of any thing. At the end of the town I had the boldness to stop at a millionaire's * house and purchase, I could but ill afford it, a deep green shade for my eyes, which, being so long used to a much weaker light than that of the sun, notwithstanding their natural strength, were much fatigued by so unusual a glare. This shade, for good reasons,

* A milliner or a haberdasher, what would now be called a dealer in furnishing goods and notions. Milliner is really a corruption of Milaner, meaning one who dealt in the finery for which Milan was famous. But the old dictionaries derived it from the Latin *mille*, a thousand, "as one having a thousand small wares to sell" (*Minshieu's Dictionary*, 1627). The extension to millionaire is interesting as a bit of wrong-headed logic. But it is possible that the word is a misprint. —*Editor's Note.*

I had made so deep as to come half way down my nose, and hide a good deal of my face. At the end of the town stood an inn, and at its door a stage coach; I made the best of my way to it, and, seeing a man stand by the side of the horses, with a whip in his hand, I asked if he were the coachman? He said he was, and stared at me in a manner that I could have boxed his ears; he walked round me and looked at me behind and before, and from head to foot.

"Have you lost any body that is at all like me, coachman?" said I, which he answered by saying, "we have plenty of room inside, madam;" upon which he took my bundle and put it into the coach, and offered me his arm to help me in after it. I said I would come in a minute, and ran into the bar of the inn to get a bit of bread and cheese and a glass of ale. Casting my eyes through the window, I saw the coachman peep into one corner of my bundle and tie it up again. I opened the window and scolded the man and bade him let my things alone. He readily made the care of my property his excuse, and said, "the cloth was getting loose, and if any thing was lost the proprietors of the coach must make it up to the owner." Getting into the coach he asked me whither I was going? I said into Cumberland, and that I would pay my fare at my journey's end.

"Very well, ma'am," said he, with an odd look, "that will do."

He shut me in—there was no other passenger withinside. The coach not setting off I put down a window to look if the coachman was on his box, and this quite unobserved by him, for I heard him say to the guard, who sat with him, "We have got her, Tom, safe

enough; I know she is the woman, for the clothes that are named in the hand-bills are tied up in her bundle. I should not have suspected her if she had not took so much pains to hide her face with that green thing."

I was doubting whether to make some excuse to get out when he put his whip to the horses and away he went. I had too much reason, without the help of my conscience, to take what he said to myself, but was a little puzzled at his driving me away. I was not very willing, however, to stay to have this puzzle explained, for, while he was walking his horses up a steep hill, I took my bundle, slipped out of the coach at a sudden turn in the road, which I saw would favour my escape, and got clear off. How soon the coachman missed his inside passenger I can't say, but as the road made a sort of curve round the top of the hill, I could see him galloping away at half a mile's distance, with the coach-door wide open.

This was another sudden turn in my affairs—what a good prospect I had of leaving all my dangers behind me, and how suddenly was I left in the lurch by dame Fortune, who had a mind to play me one of her old tricks! The first thing I did was to get out of the road as fast as I could; for, though the coachman might drive ten miles before he missed me, he might not drive one. In this case, too much disguise was worse than none; the more I was hid, the less I lay concealed. My green shade, which was five times as large as it need have been, brought suspicion on me, so the first thing I did was to pare off what I did not want of it. What next to do I was now much in doubt. At one time I had a mind to return to the last town, and put myself under the protection of the first magistrate, and

would certainly have done it if I had not been posted for a murderer; but not knowing how this story might be told, and with how much poise against all I might say, and not be believed, too, weighed too much against this. I had walked half a mile back, however, with this resolution, but I turned about again, and thought it best not to risk my liberty upon such a cast. The days being short, and the sun getting low, I now purposed to keep out of the road till it grew dark, and travel by night when I should be less seen and meet fewer people, for I soon found I might have more light than made for my safety in my present situation, posted as I stood for a murderer, and two hundred guineas set upon my head.

CHAPTER XIII

Genevieve's Narrative continued

(Mr. and Mrs. Decastro now came back into the room, and Genevieve having, at their request, tied the story together where it was broken off, and given them the thread, proceeded as follows.)

As soon as it grew dark I came out of the dry ditch, where I had sat till I was very cold, and took my way upon the high road, which, luckily, I now had all to myself. I held on until three o'clock the next morning, only taking a little rest at intervals by sitting down upon my bundle. My shoes now began to fail me, and were worn so thin that I felt every little pebble through the bottoms of them! It is not quite the best way to prepare against accidents, to take no care till they come. Having nothing to carry me but my feet, I soon found I must be tender of them, or I should get lame and not able to walk; this was a serious matter, and I sat down to take their case into consideration. I had not sat long before I heard wheels, a night coach came up, and the coachman stopping to make some change in the harness, I asked him how far it was to the next town? He said it was five miles. I asked him if he would take me there for sixpence? He said he would, and, as he helped me into the coach, he added, "The woman who had committed the murder is taken, madam."

"I am glad to hear it," said I, and so I was, for I thought myself all the safer. On went the coachman, and soon whipped away my sixpence, for he stopped at the door of an inn in a moment, as it seemed to me, who had fallen to sleep in the coach. Taking heart from what the coachman had told me, I went boldly in to the inn, and asked what they would charge for a bed? Being answered one shilling as the price, I ate some bread and butter, drank a glass of warm brandy and water, and went into a very comfortable warm bed. How folks sleep that take a dose of opium, I don't know, never having tried it, but if I had swallowed an apothecary's shop, apothecary and all, I might have slept longer, but I could not have slept sounder than I did for ten hours.

The moment I awoke, I leaped out of bed as gay as a lark, and a very delightful and refreshing thing it was, indeed, to me, to undress myself and sleep without the heavy encumbrance of my clothes, which I had not now done for more than a month! Aye, in high spirits, until I thought upon the lowness of my pocket, for I had scarcely ten shillings left in my purse! It is well for such as roll in riches over head and ears like a pig in a puddle, just to feel, for once in their lives, what it is to want money. One had been, and one was now my case. I came down stairs and ordered some breakfast, for, low as my finances were, I had still enough for that, and sat down to some tea and toast, and a good fire, with a very fine appetite. After having devoured four large plates of toast and butter, and drank ten dishes of tea, a woman came into my room, and eyed me all over; and, though I asked her what she wanted, she went out and made me no answer. I well

remembered the face of the woman, and it came into my head, like a flash of lightning, that I had seen her at one of the houses where we had stopped on my horrible journey from Oaken Grove!—I paid my bill and left the house in five minutes. I am afraid you will think that I am drawing upon my invention for your amusement, but I had not walked twenty yards from the inn before two men seized me! I asked them how they dared to lay hands on me in a public street? And under what warrant? They made no reply, and their silence was the more hateful to me, the horrid examples which I had so lately met with of it being fresh in my memory.

“They have got her,” said somebody, and the two fellows began to haul me away. Not knowing what I could better do I e’en went with them, when, presently, we met two or three, one of which, like one in authority, came up and said, “What are ye doing? this is the wrong person. Madam,” said he to me, “we are very sorry, and hope you are not hurt.”

“If not in my person,” said I, angry enough, “I am in my feelings; how dare these men lay hands upon me in a public street, and bring such a rabble about me?” for there were at least an hundred people got round us.

“It would give you unnecessary pain to have the thing explained,” said he, “I hope you will be satisfied with our begging your pardon and releasing you.”

“What,” said one who stood by me, “such a beautiful woman as that commit a murder! I could not think it possible.”

Upon which he fell to abuse them that held me with no sparing hand. I smelt a rat, as John Mathers

sometimes says, and made the best of my way out of that town. A good face is a letter of recommendation, some philosopher once said,*—I now thought it might not be altogether ill-observed, for, from what the man who gave orders for my release added, which it is quite needless to repeat, I am very well assured that I might thank my face for my liberty. I had now got, upon a very fair computation, at least forty miles upon my way homewards, but could not make my escape from this report. I was not put to much trouble, however, to find reasons for it, as I followed the coachman, step by step, who had been pleased to think that he had got me and two hundred guineas safe in his pocket, for I did not fail to pick up intelligence of him as I went along; but as for going, I could now go no farther, for one of my shoes was quite worn out, so that my foot came bare to the ground, and the other was little better, like twins, that usually come into and go out of the world much about the same time. I had been put of late into a variety of new situations, I was now put out of an old one in which I had always stood, videlicet, a good pair of shoes. I could not, at this time, afford to buy new, so I walked into a second-hand shop and bought a pair of old ones for three shillings; and I thought I must have walked out, as I walked in, without any, when the man put his hand upon two things that were neither shoe nor boot, but something between

*The 267th of the "Maxims" of Publilius Syrus runs: "A fair exterior is a silent recommendation." Was Thackeray also thinking of this when he wrote in "The Virginians," chapter xxi: "Nature has written a letter of credit upon some men's faces, which is honored almost wherever presented"? —*Editor's Note.*

both, well nailed in on their bottoms, which, the cobbler said, he had bought for two shillings and ninepence of a fisherman. I stepped into them with ease and found myself almost knee-deep in good stout leather; they fitted me well; I laced them upon my legs, for that was the way to wear them, put down my three shillings, and walked away, the cobbler observing, truly enough, that the Queen of England never had such a pair of shoes in her life.

Folks are apt to make comparisons. I had not walked far before some were saucy enough to look at my fine muslin gown, and then at my shoes, and fall a-laughing. Finding that I was not dressed to people's liking, and that I wanted money, which was not much to my own, I walked into an old clothes shop, and pulling off my fine muslin gown, threw it upon the counter, and asked a woman who stood there, what she would give me for it? She looked at my shoes, and asked where I stole it? I was too poor to be saucy in my turn, but, opening my bundle, said, I had more things to sell, and was glad enough to get rid of that part of my wardrobe which had like to have proved so fatal to me. While I was putting out what I meant to sell, the woman was taken up with my muslin gown, and raised her eyes in wonder at its fineness. When her eyes came down again they happened to drop upon my linen, which was very dirty and ragged, and well it might be, for I had worn it six weeks, and taking t'other glance at my shoes, she said she should call her husband before she went any farther with that gown; and she was as good as her word, for she bawled loud enough to be heard a mile.

"I don't know what we have got in the shop," said

she to a man who came in, "besides thieves—look at that gown;" he did, and at me too, and giving his wife a wink, told her to step out and bring Mr. Clarke. Who Mr. Clarke was I did not know, but soon did, for he appeared presently, with two others, and said he was the constable. The man of the shop then said he knew the gown, and, telling Mr. Clarke to take care of me until he came back, went out of the shop and took my gown along with me. At all this I was not a little astonished. In regard to my gown, however, my conscience was clear; having found a coarse black thing that was large enough for my broad back, I put it on and a tawdry handkerchief upon my neck, which some country wench had left at the shop for what money she could get, and was now Mrs. Secondhand from head to foot, my hat only excepted. The man of the shop at this moment returned, and said, he had been mistaken, the gown did not belong to my lady, but my lady had told him that it belonged to some woman of fashion, and had cost a great deal of money. Upon this the constable and his two lords in waiting went their way, and left me with a character as bright as silver. I told the people of the shop that they had done extremely well in stopping a suspicious person, and begged to know what the lady's name was whose clothes I was thought to have stolen. That was neither here nor there, the man said; he kept a shop, it was true, but he did not sell any answers at it. I told him I would not give him a farthing for one if he did, so, striking the balance between what I had bought and what I had sold, I took the money which was due to me upon it, about twenty shillings, and went my way, not without good reasons to think myself cheated, which was like

enough, not being much of a dealer in old clothes. As for the man he looked very much like a rogue; the woman was well enough, though I have seen a crack in an old church wall very much like her mouth—their name was Thummingbottom.

I came out of this old clothes shop much more of a piece than I went into it, though, when I passed people, I sometimes heard it said, "*what shoes she has!*" I felt much solid comfort in them, however, for they kept my feet and ankles warm and out of harm's way. Being now totally changed in my dress, the outside of it I mean, from the thing I was, I began to think myself, as far as clothes went, pretty safe. But I was mistaken, for going through a village an immense creature came out of a house, and swore to her gown!—

"Pray," said I, "how do you know it to be yours?"

She made no scruple to take up my tail and showed me "Rachel Gift" marked, with red threads, in one corner of it!

"Is your name Rachel Gift, good woman?" said I.

"As surely as this is my gown," said she, taking me rudely enough by my petticoats and pulling me, before I could stand upon my guard, into her habitation!

"We have a nice cage for a blackbird in our town," said she, glancing at the colour of my apparel, and darting out in a moment, locked me into her house. There happened to be a back door as well as a grand entrance, upon which I set one of my heavy shoes against it, and sent the wooden portal at one kick flying, hinges and lock and bolts altogether, into a bed of cabbages! Folks have different ways of opening doors, some use keys; I had no time to stand piddling into locks, so kicked my way out of the house and left another to

shut the door after me. Off I went, and left Rachel Gift to tell her neighbours the story. Finding my clothes almost as much my enemies as ever, I skirted the high roads by paths and bridle-ways for some time, looking behind me, now and then, to see if Rachel Gift was a-coming. Meeting a country wench, I thought she looked as if she had a month's mind to my handkerchief!

"Good day," said she.

"Good day," said I.

"You have got a very pretty handkerchief, ma'am," said she.

"There was no thought of pleasing you when it was bought," said I.

"Yes, but there was," said she, "for I bought it myself, which I think was more than you did—and I will swear to it too, which I think is more than you can," saying which, she made a sudden snatch at it and tore it off my neck and bosom, pins and all, and fairly outran me with it in her hand, which she would have found it no easy matter to have done but for my great heavy shoes, that tumbled me to the ground two or three times, when I was e'en forced to give the hussy up. Looking behind me I saw Rachel Gift coming as fast after me as I had gone after the slut who snatched off my handkerchief!

Now it was my turn to run away, which I did a great deal faster than when I ran after my handkerchief, and left Rachel Gift behind. A wood was at hand, I dashed into it, and getting into the midst of it, sat down and fell a-laughing; but my merriment was very short, for I presently heard men's voices, and, "which way is she gone?" struck my ear with no very pleasing sound. A

great elm-tree stood near me, I mounted it, and climbing high enough amongst the boughs of it to look above the underwood, I could descry Rachel Gift and half a dozen stout fellows looking into every hedge and ditch they could find, for she lost sight of me at a hedge corner. I took the advantage of it, stole off a contrary way, and threw Rachel Gift out. I lay quiet in the wood till hunger forced me out of it, and that would have brought out a lion, so getting up into the tree, and finding the coast clear, I took a sort of half circle and came round into the great road again, with the tail of my gown thrown over my head to keep my neck warm, and that was hardly fair to uncover one part to cover another. But I was a little too near the last village to be very much at my ease on the high road, so, furnishing my bundle with some bread and cheese and a bottle of ale, all which I very honestly paid for, I returned to the fields and sat down under an oak to eat my dinner, about a quarter of a mile distant from the road. My voracious appetite now took up all my attention, and while I was eating my bread and cheese with the stomach of a horse, all on a sudden I felt two paws behind me, one on each shoulder! I started round in a moment, and expected to see something worse than Rachel Gift's ghost, when, to my no small terror and amazement, I saw the very mastiff which ran me down in the rosary walk when I was seized by Frederick's banditti! I gave the dog a piece of bread, for he seemed very hungry, and while he was eating it I caught him up by his hinder legs, and, giving him a circular whirl, dashed out his brains at one blow against the body of the oak under which I had been sitting.

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I instantly ran away, and, getting down into a hollow ditch, lay upon the watch to see if any body came after the dog. I was not disappointed, for, presently, four men on horseback came into the field where I had sat at dinner, and found the dog dead lying under the oak. I saw them take him up and examine him, and, what added to my consternation, one of them was the very man whom I saw at the turnpike! I had got my mouth full of bread, and had like to have choked myself. I crawled all the way along the ditch upon my hands and knees, with my bundle betwixt my teeth, and was so lucky as to make my escape out at the end of it. If I had not killed the dog I should certainly have been found, for I tried all the means in my power to drive the dog away, but to no purpose. I cannot but think he had something of the blood-hound in him, and had been brought to hunt me out. I put an end to his hunting, however, for that time.

In this hasty scramble down the ditch my gown came off pretty well, one of my petticoats came off too, but in another way, for I lost half a yard of it. There are some places in the world in which one on foot is more than a match for one on horseback, which sort of place it was my good fortune now to get into. It abounded with enclosures, thick hedges and deep ditches, which answered a double purpose, they not only served to hide me but to stop my hunters. It was not very likely, however, that it should at all come into their heads that it was I who had killed their dog, and, I make no doubt, when they had pulled the dog about till they were satisfied that he could be of no further use to them, they returned to the road. They gave me no further trouble in the way of close pursuit,

I mean in beating the hedges and ditches for me, for, not having got a sight of me, how could they expect to find me like a hare in a bush? They gave me no further trouble this way certainly, but much dread and vexation indeed, still to find that I had not outrun my dangers.

To proceed. After listening and peeping through hedges and corners till I was tired, I sat down again to finish my dinner, which I had the satisfaction now to do without further molestation. Having made so many escapes I began to be afraid that my luck would turn, and my good fortune was of no very ordinary cast that brought me out of the town where I had a gentleman at each arm to take care of me. There must have been some very bad management in that business by what manner of means soever it happened, some grand mistake or other, I cannot but think:—and whether the woman who came into my room at the inn, knew me as well as I knew her, or had any doubts, or whether she had been informed of my escape, and had orders to be upon the look-out for me, or how the matter might be, all put together had too much riddle in it for me to solve. One thing, however, I was now sure of, and that was, my pursuers were at that moment within a very few miles of me, and might very likely pop upon me at last if I did not take a great deal of care, and move with the utmost circumspection. The place, however, where I now happened to be, was so embroiled with enclosures, and, having no bypath that I could find, made so much against my progress, that I was even forced to return to the high road again, beset as it was with dangers. I had now travelled on it for six or seven miles, looking behind me at every tenth

step, when I came on a sudden to a road that branched off to the left hand. Seeing a carter ride that way in his wagon, I asked him whither it led? He told me it took a turn for about ten miles and came again into the great road. I had other reasons for not being best pleased with the said great road, though I knew it to be my way home, as well as this, viz. I expected soon to meet the coachman on his return, who had been so kind as to let me slip through his fingers lately, and that he had done me some special good offices on his journey I had little cause to doubt. Now, to choose, I had sooner met Satan, for he was a very sharp, shrewd sort of fellow. One way to avoid him was to get out of the road.

“Carter,” said I, “will you give a poor woman a ride in your wagon that has nothing to give but her thanks for your favours?”

“Aye, pretty maiden,” said he, “and will thank you for your company.”

Upon which he jumped off the shafts of his wagon, and handed me into it, with a kind squeeze round my waist.

“Whence came you?” said I.

“From the last market-town,” said the man. “I have been to draw in ten quarters of barley for master.”

“Any news stirring in it?” said I.

“There was some woman taken up for murdering her brother there, I think they said; but I was not in time to see her,” said he. By this I soon knew, well enough, what town he meant.

“Any thing else?” said I, willing to turn the subject.

“O,” said the fellow, “you know all about it, I warrant.”

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"Why d'ye think so?" said I, a little confused at his observation.

"Why," said he, "if you had not you would have asked me a thousand questions about such a thing, I'm sure."

I was forced to own that I did, and that I came from the same town too, in order to get him off the subject.

"This is old news," said I; "did you hear any thing else?"

"Do you know Master Thummingbottom, the old clothes-man?" said he. I had as lief he had not said any thing about Master Thummingbottom, too.

"What of him?" said I.

"Do you know him?" said he. I confessed it.

"What are you boggling at," said the fellow; "are you related to him? if you are you have one rogue for a kinsman, that's all; he is just taken up for receiving stolen goods."

"O, he is no relation of mine," said I, "and I wish he may be hanged with all my heart!"

"So do I," said the carter; "there's not a greater rascal on this side of the Dee; my mother lost a black gown, as good as new, and all the neighbours thought that he had got it in his shop, but nothing could be proved, so she was forced to give up all thoughts of it, though she could have sworn to her gown, for her name was sewed with red thread into the tail of it." It came into my head that I had the very gown upon my back at the moment. "Rachel Gift is my mother's name," added he; "she lives in a village not far off."

This convinced me of it; I sat very quiet, however, by the side of the honest carter, who seemed so much taken up with looking at my face, that, if I had been

dressed from head to foot in his mother's clothes, I don't think he would have found it out; he put his arm round my waist, and would have kissed me if I had not tumbled him off his wagon. I did not ride quite so much at my ease as I had done, after I heard the news, and began to beat my brains for an escape, when my gallant carter, having remounted his wagon and promised to be civil, began again upon the murder, and said that he did not think that he had got the right story.

"What did you hear?" said I.

"Why," said he, taking an old quid of tobacco out of his mouth,—I should have had a delightful kiss!—taking an old quid of tobacco out of his mouth, and putting in a new one, "Why," said he, "you must know, after I had shot my master's corn into the cistern, I went into the Pig's-tail and Candle-stick, and called for a pot of sixpenny, had it made hot, a toast put into it, and a little nutmeg—well, while I sat by the fire-side drinking my beer, in comes a man in a horseman's great coat and boots and a whip in his hand, a great scar above his right eye, and a little lame on the left leg; 'Well, carter,' said he, calling for a glass of rum and milk, and sitting down by me, 'which road did you come?' so I told him.—'D'ye think you should know a woman if you were to see one?' 'I thought I should,' I said. 'He's upon his fun,' said I to myself.

"'You did not meet one, did you, in a white gown and a pair of man's shoes?'

"'No,' said I.

"'Nor in a black gown, man's shoes, and a coloured handkerchief?'

“‘No,’ said I.

“‘Nor in a brown gown, brown petticoat, and straw hat?’”

“‘No,’ said I; ‘I met neither a black gown, a white gown, nor a brown petticoat, or any other petticoat, or thing, belonging to a woman, all the way. Is any thing the matter?’ said I.

“‘No great thing,’ said the man, ‘a woman has murdered her brother, and I and my comrades are in chase of her, that’s all.’

“‘D’ye come out of the land of devils,’ said I, ‘and call a murder no great thing?’

“‘Why,’ he said, ‘the devil and I were no great way apart last night, for I was in the very house where the murder was committed. The man that was murdered was my master, he and his sister fell out, and she stabbed him with a knife that she held in her hand at supper time, and ran out of the house. She is a very handsome woman, but as strong and as furious as a tiger; she stabbed her brother with such force that she put the knife at one blow, handle and all, into his body. We have traced her as far as this town in different dresses, sometimes she wears one colour and sometimes another to escape from justice; and it is not long since a man came into this house and said he had met her in a black gown, for I am sure it must be the very woman by his description of her. She is every way as big as a man, and twice as strong. Two hundred guineas reward is offered to any who will take her. They had the very woman in hand here this morning, for she was seen in an inn by a lady of my acquaintance, who was upon the watch for her, but the constable, some fool, let her go by mistake.’”

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I stopped the fellow [here, and said I had been told the same story, but the person whom they laid hands on in the town was certainly no murderer, for I knew her very well, and it was not long since I saw her—she was a lady of very good family, who meant to bring an action against the people for an assault. “Pray,” said I, “can you tell me who the lady was that said she saw this person at an inn?”

“We shall go by her house presently,” said the cart-er; “it stands in the middle of that wood just before us, I shall stop there to take my mother up.”

The wagon by this time had grown a great deal too hot to hold me any longer; I said I was cold, notwithstanding, and would walk a little to warm myself; I might overtake him again presently—upon which I jumped off the wagon without giving the carter the trouble to stop his horses, when he turned and called after me, saying, “If you should happen to see *that woman*, call here, at farmer Buck’s, about two miles farther, the house stands by the road side, and let me know, and if I take her into custody you shall come in for fifty guineas for your share of the reward.” Upon which he whipped his horses on, and I was not very sorry to see the last of him.

I could have asked the fellow a hundred questions, but was afraid of getting known, if for nothing worse than as the wearer of his mother’s gown, which might have led to other matters. He had opened my eyes a little, however, and I thought I had best be content with what intelligence I had got from him. I now stepped out of the road, and getting behind a hedge, untied my bundle to get at my bread and cheese, and look for something to put over my neck, for, having

my gown thrown over my head, one part was kept warm at the expense of another, and the weather was very cold. Taking a prudent peep into the road to see if the coast was clear, I came again into it, and walked on. Presently I entered the wood aforesaid, and a very thick and dark wood it was, notwithstanding the leaves were fallen, and the sun shone through the boughs, some places excepted, where the yew, the holly and the fir intercepted the rays of it, which grew in great abundance on all sides. The road that ran through this wood made such angles that I could not see, in some parts, above fifty yards before me, a thing not the most agreeable to one who did not care how far she saw before her for reasons of some importance. At every angle I poked out my head to look for the house where the carter was to take up Madam Gift, and, though I was pretty sure that he must be gone by long enough before me, for I sat half an hour behind the hedge to let him get away, I thought a good look-out made most for my advantage. I got close to the house before I was at all aware of it, however. It stood just behind a tuft of yew-trees—as soon as I saw it I knew it in a moment—my blood ran cold at the sight of it—in this house I was made a prisoner for the whole day on my late excursion to the banks of the river Dee. I cast my eyes on the high walls which at that time fenced me in on all sides, and felt not a little glad that I was now on the right side to run away. But in order to keep on that same right side, I turned off into the wood in order to form a half circle, and see without being seen, and when I came immediately opposite to it, I peeped through a thick holly-bush, and saw the very carriage standing at the door in which I was carried off!

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It had four horses harnessed to it, all ready, as it proved, to go off, and it came into my head that I had quite as lieve walk on foot as ride in it. Nothing could be better hid than I took care to be. I thought it best to wait and let the carriage go first, for, as luck would have it, the horses' heads were turned my way. In a little time I saw the legs of one man get into it, and then of another, and then of another, and then of another; one of them put down a blind, and I could plainly see my old friend again!—I kept my eyes fixed on the house, and presently saw the woman who treated me so kindly with cold meats and wine when I had the honour to be kept a prisoner in her dwelling, and the same who had taken so critical a review of me at the inn. Now, that these men, whoever they were, and this carriage were in pursuit of me, I could not entertain the smallest doubt, but they drove off at such a furious rate as surely could but ill answer their purpose if they had the least suspicion that I was behind them. Seeing no man, except an old decrepit fellow, who had been put at the heads of the horses, and this woman, about the house, I had a very great mind to have gone to the door to get some news; I came to second and better thoughts upon it, however, and having taken a sketch of the house in my pocket-book, I skirted along the wood for a quarter of a mile, and came again into the highway.

CHAPTER XIV

Genevieve's Narrative Concluded

I walked on, interrupted by nothing but my fears, until night, when I got a comfortable lodging at a poor woman's house in a little village, for sixpence, and after eating a piece of bread and cheese for my supper, and drinking some ale, which I bought in the said village, I went to bed and slept well after my day's walk. I arose early—it was a fine frosty morning—paid the poor woman my sixpence for my bed, and would have given her five times as much if I could have afforded it, thanked her, wished her a good morning, and walked away. While I was eating my supper, I made some inquiries about the house in the wood, which had very much engaged my thoughts, and the rather, as it was the second time that I had seen a certain carriage at the door of it. The woman said it was well I did not stop at it, it being a very bad house, and kept by a very bad woman, named Williams, who was said to have run away from London for none of her best deeds, or good qualities. She added, that there had been a great deal of talk half a year since about some wicked men who had committed a sad outrage there—they had stolen some young lady, and brought her to this house by force, and did a deed which they deserved to be hanged for; some servant, who came away upon a quarrel, having told the story. The thing had made sufficient noise to engage the attention of the magistrates, but,

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after an investigation into the matter, the business was dropped, for nothing could be made of it. The house was called the Angel Inn, the woman added, but it lay under much suspicion of being a cover for all sorts of ill people, and ill things. I had, of course, very little doubt but that I was the person alluded to; this, however, I kept to myself, and, after asking a few more questions, said nothing else to the poor woman about it. The carriage, however, in which I was brought there made some talk; it was said to be more like a great chest than a carriage, with two lids to it, and two locks, and the poor lady, whoever she was, had been locked into it.

To return: The day being very fine I walked a great many miles in it, and should have walked a good deal more to the purpose if all the steps which I took could have been brought to the right account, for I often ran out of the road when, perhaps, there was little cause; one time, however, I had a very good one, for I had like to have met the very coachman on his return, who left one inside passenger behind him without being paid his fare. I knew the man as soon as I saw him and just stepped behind a bush in time. If he had been much upon the look-out he must certainly have seen me, for he came round a corner before I could make my escape.

People with low pockets sometimes lodge high—I got a garret the next night for three-pence and a bed in it, as for curtains I left them to my betters, the want of them did not keep me awake, however. The bed-linen was very clean, which was more than I could say of my own, but so coarse, that when I got into bed I felt as if I was scratched all over! The next day I

made a longer march of it than any, and for this reason, I made fewer deviations; for the road was straighter, and I could see farther before me, so had less occasion to run away from the noise of carriages which I could not see before they came near me. I walked more miles this day than any yet, and met with very little hindrance; coming into a small village at night I saw a little bit of paper stuck in a window with "*Two Lodgings*" written upon it, which I could read by the help of a candle that shone through the paper. I, upon this, knocked at the door, and asked an old lady, who sat at her supper, if both her lodgings were engaged?

"Come in, young woman," said she, "let me look if you are clean in your person."

Upon which I was forced to submit to be examined, and I am sure the woman would have undressed me if I would have let her.

"Come," said I, "good woman, you shall go no farther, so let my clothes alone; either say if you will take me in or not, or you will keep me till folks are gone to bed and then I may lie in a ditch."

She then pulled off her spectacles, and, saying that she did not think that I was infested, let me a bed for twopence halfpenny. She asked threepence, but I told her I had a long way to walk home, and could not afford such a large sum of money. It was a wretched hut, and so small one might put one's arm down the chimney and open the front door. Every thing in it, however, was extremely clean; there was not a rag in the house but what was as white as snow. Looking at my bundle, the old woman would fain have persuaded me to put on clean linen before I went to bed, but I

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told her I had none but what was on my back, or would gladly have changed all the clothes I had on.

"Well, well," said she, "I have got my rent to pay to-morrow, so must not be too nice; or, I love to speak the truth, I would have staid for something cleaner; but I believe o' my conscience you are an honest girl, for I am sure that face would soon put better clothes upon your back."

The old woman ran on while I ate the remainder of my day's provisions, when, rising, I begged to see my apartment. Coming into it, since she had examined my clothes, I took a plea in my turn to examine her bed—all was very coarse, but extremely clean. I asked her what her other lodger was, as I found one was gone to bed before I came in. She said a poor travelling woman like myself. Upon which I went to bed and slept like one dead until seven o'clock the next morning, when, getting out of bed to dress myself, I could not find my clothes! It came into my head that the woman might have taken them when I was asleep, by way of pawn for my lodging, thinking that I might steal off in the night without paying my bill. Presently, hearing the old lady stirring, I called her into my apartment; she came in wringing her hands and crying bitterly that she was ruined!

"Ruined!" said I, "what d'ye mean by ruined?" Her other lodger, she said, had robbed her, and made her escape in the night! "Robbed you!" said I, "why I am robbed as well as you—I have lost all my clothes!"

My situation may be better guessed at than described. I could not leave my bed, for I had nothing to put on! My bundle I had forgot till that moment, when I recollected to have put it behind the bolster to

raise it a little, for pillows were not to be found amongst the luxuries of this house. I looked for it and found it where I put it; the thief either not knowing it to be there, or, fearing lest she should disturb me in coming at it, left it behind. I was rejoiced at the sight of it, for what little money I had was wrapped up in it; as for clothes, all had been sold on the road, except what I had on. My money amounted to ten shillings and sixpence; the value of money never struck my mind with such irresistible force as it did at this moment. There lay poor I, worth at the very moment more than one hundred thousand pounds, which I told the poor woman with many promises of assistance, but she said my losses had turned my head, as she thought hers would her own, when her landlord came for his rent, and put her into jail for not being able to pay it, there lay poor I, few women, perhaps, in the kingdom at that very moment richer, with nothing but the bed clothes to cover me, and as hungry as a wolf, debating the matter between my stomach and my back, how I might provide the best for both out of the miserable pittance which the thief had left me. It is good to know what it is to be in want, what it is to be cold and naked, what it is to be hungry—as to being cold, that I was not at the moment, as I lay tucked up between two blankets; but I was as hungry as a kite, and so I let the old woman know with a loud voice, who came into my room in great consternation, for she said she thought I was “making away with myself.” I told her I had more mind to live than to die if I could get anything to eat, and asked her if she had any bread in the house?

“Have you any money?” said she.

“Why,” said I, “suppose I have none, and you may do so with good reason, for it is the first thing a thief will take, and the last he will leave behind, would you see me die for hunger sooner than bring me a bit of bread which you knew I could not pay you for?”

“No, my dear,” said the poor woman, bursting into tears, but whether upon my account or her own I could not tell, until she brought me a piece of a loaf with some lard spread upon it, and a dish of tea without cream or sugar. I now burst into tears in my turn, for my tears dropped upon my bread as I held it in my hand.

“Good woman,” said I, “this is very kind in you; for I am sure, in the wretched state which you now see me, you could never expect to be paid for your bread—and it is the sweetest bit of bread that I ever ate in my life, for I am sure it comes from the hand of charity. Let others build magnificent hospitals and show the world what special good folks they are, who die and give the poor what they can no longer keep themselves; let others subscribe their guineas to charitable donations, put their names at full length into newspapers, and get it told by the blast of the postman’s horn where we are to look to find the pomp of charity—this little bit of bread, brought to a poor wretch in a dark corner where none can see how kind a thing is done, outweighs all the rest.”

I shook the poor woman very kindly by the hand, and, raising myself in my bed, showed her that I could pay both for my board and lodging.

She turned her back upon me, saying, she would not be paid where she did not look for money:—my lodging she had bargained for, I might pay her for that if I

pleased, but I was welcome to my bread, and it did her good to see me eat with such an appetite. I said a hundred kind things to the poor woman which it is needless to repeat, and made her a promise, which I should deserve to be hanged if I forget, to settle an annuity upon her for her life; upon which she cast an eye of pity on me, and said, "she was afraid the thief had robbed me of my wits as well as my clothes."

When I had eat enough to abate my appetite, though not to satisfy it, I refused to take any more of the poor woman's bread, for every bit that I put into my mouth came, I was sure, from one who could not afford to give, whose heart was kinder than her means were great, and who, while she was kind, forgot that she was poor. I refused, I say, to take any more of the poor woman's bread, though I could have eaten a great deal more, and asked her what could be done to get me something to cover me? She said she could not tell me, for she had been robbed of all her clothes but what she had upon her back, and four weeks rent put by for her landlord into the bargain. The poor woman had forgot her losses while she was feeding me, but they soon returned to her mind, and she fell a-crying again as if she would break her heart. I comforted her as well as I could, and offered her half my money, but she asked me a question which I could not very well answer, "How I could get any clothes if I gave her my money?"

"But," said I, "you may have some old ragged petticoats which you have left off, and which nobody but one in my situation could ever be expected to purchase, or any thieves think worth their pains to steal: go," said I, "and see what you can find; rags are not for every market, now is your time to sell."

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The poor woman returned presently with a great bag, which she untied before me, and the first thing that appeared was a large pair of woollen trowsers, which, she said, belonged to her poor husband, who, it seems, was dead. They were patched, it was true, with pieces of various colours, but were washed very clean, and I thought they looked as if they would fit me. I asked her if she would take two shillings for them. She said she would, so I took her at her word and laid them by. Many matters in her bag were too delicate to bear the least touch, for two or three things that had been petticoats came to pieces in the handling; presently I got hold of one, which, she said, was her grandmother's. It was made of thick stout flannel, the upper part was pretty good, but the lower looked as if the old woman, some time or other, had been seized by a pack of hounds, and every dog had pulled a different way, it was so ragged; I saw, however, it would cover me as low as my knees very well. I bid her a shilling for it; she stuck a little, but agreed at last, so I laid the petticoat upon the trowsers, and fell to fishing again in the old woman's bag. I was very much afraid that I had got the best of it, for I could get hold of nothing but mere rags that came up in separate handfuls; presently, however, I tangled one of my fingers in a string, and began to pull, still it resisted, I pulled harder.

"Gently, my dear," said the old woman, "gently." I gave another pull, when up came a gown and petticoat together, and one worsted stocking; it was black and had a red foot. The gown, which looked as if it had been made out of an old green curtain, was very ragged and forlorn above, but pretty good below, quite

the reverse of the flannel petticoat, so it came into my head that the gown and the petticoat would manage matters very well between them; for the gown would hide what the petticoat could not conceal, and the petticoat would conceal what the gown could not hide, so I bid the old woman a shilling for it. She came to my price, and was so well pleased as to throw me in the upper part of an old red cloak with a hood to it which covered my neck and shoulders very well, the lower part being all torn away. Still I was much in want of something to go round my body. The bag seemed yet to have a great deal in it, I thrust my arm in again for another dip, down I went to the very bottom of it, and seemed to put my hand into something like a pocket; I closed my hand fast, and, bidding the old woman lay hold of the bottom of the bag with both her hands, I gave a good tug, and out came a deluge of rags, three or four old wigs, two pair of breeches, halves and quarters of petticoats, pieces of old tapestry, bits of bed-curtains, remnants of rugs, and at the bottom of all, for I never quitted my hold, up came a very good woollen jacket with sleeves, which both from the materials and colour, for, notwithstanding the patches, the original garment prevailed, bore us out, beyond all dispute, to belong to the trowsers. I put the old woman down two shillings for it; she refused the money. I put t'other sixpence, she scratched her head.

"Come," said I, "two shillings and eight-pence for the jacket:" she took a pinch of snuff. "Well," said I, "make weight with this piece of old tapestry with Joseph and Potiphar upon it, and I will give you three shillings."

She agreed, and I put these things to the rest of my

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bargains. Amongst other rubbish that came out of the bag, at the last great pull, was a man's hat with a cock to it; all the rest was torn off, the cock excepted, and that was left: the crown was good, so I cut off the cock and offered the old woman two-pence for it. She came to my terms, so, tying the brims of an old straw hat round the crown of the beaver with a garter, which, not standing upon trifles, she said I might take, I made a pretty good covering for my head out of both, for they helped one another out like the gown and petticoat aforesaid. I was now forced to hold my hand in order to cast up my account between me and the old woman, and see how my money stood, for I had two sides to make provision for, viz., outside and inside; and, while I was furnishing the one, it would not have been fair to have forgotten the other; my account with my old hostess stood thus:—

	L.	S.	D.
A pair of woollen trowsers - - -	0	2	0
A flannel petticoat - - - - -	0	1	0
A gown - - - - -	0	1	0
A woollen jacket and bit of tapestry - -	0	3	0
The crown of an old hat with its cock } cut off - - - - -	0	0	2
GRAND TOTAL	0	7	2

I now found that I had only three shillings and four-pence left and my bed not paid for. I reckoned upon at least two days to come upon the road, and it might be more, if I met with any interruptions, so I had now gone quite as far as I could by any means afford, for the outside of my person, and, though I felt a great hankering after a pretty good checked apron, which would have very well covered all the holes in my gown

and petticoat, I was forced to put up with a piece of an old mat instead, which certainly answered my purpose as far as the covering of holes went, and only cost one penny, for the old woman gave me a bit of an old rope to make apron strings. She now put the residue of the rags into their bag, saying, "you will not want any thing upon your feet, my dear, for your countrywomen always travel without shoes and stockings."

This was a sad oversight, and what to do I did not know.

"I suppose you take me for an Irish woman," said I, "but indeed I am no such thing, neither am I at all used to go without shoes and stockings."

"A-lack-a-day!" said the old woman, "what can we do now? I don't think I have a shoe in my bag, or any more than that one stocking with a red foot!"

"I could not afford to buy them if you had," said I, "for, when I have paid you for my bed, I shall only have three shillings and one halfpenny left to carry me two days, and perhaps two nights, on the road, for I am a long way yet from home;" upon which she threw me the black worsted stocking, the only one she had, except what she had upon her own legs, for she had been robbed of all the rest, and, turning round to carry her bag away, kicked against something that stood under the bed,—hearing the noise, which was not a little one, I leaned sideways out of it, and, looking under it, saw, to my unspeakable joy, my old shoes!

"Come," said I, "this is lucky, I don't care for stockings now, for my shoes will lace almost up to my knees." I drew on the one which she gave me nevertheless. Well, now I had got clothes the next thing was to put them on, so I sent the old woman out of the

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room, after having paid her honestly for every thing and taken one halfpenny in change, and began to dress me for the day. I had one inexpressible comfort in my rags, which was to find them all so very clean, so on went my woollen jacket first, which buttoned up to my throat, and felt very warm; the next thing I did was to step into my trowsers, and though I came into the house as a woman, I had a very great mind to go out of it as a man, for the jacket and trowsers covered me from head to foot, but I could not by any means in the world reconcile myself to my appearance, though the disguise weighed a great deal that way, and, in my present situation, might very well have got the better of my scruples. However, I could not bear the sight of myself in a man's dress, so I put on my gown and my petticoat over it, girding on the piece of tapestry behind, and my mat before, by way of apron; then, putting the remains of the red cloak over my shoulders, and my hat upon my head, I gave the old lady several hearty squeezes by the hand, and sallied forth as complete a beggar in appearance as ever was seen under a hedge. Before I left the house I made her a great many promises, which, as often as I repeated, she as often told me that my losses had turned my brains, and put down upon a bit of paper the name of the woman and her village, which I am determined to see again and make my words good with my kind-hearted hostess. I soon found, after walking a mile or two, that I could not get on so fast by any means in my new dress, I felt entangled and like one that had lost half the use of her limbs; the irritation of the woollen next my skin was very troublesome, and I am sure if any had seen me stand still to scratch myself, they would

certainly, as the old woman said, have thought me "*infested*."

It is wonderful, however, how both mind and body accommodate themselves to things by use; the weather was luckily very cold and frosty, and, though my woollen tickled my skin, I found it very warm and comfortable: I say it is wonderful what use and custom does; my dress, strange as it was to me, grew still less and less troublesome the farther I went. One very great advantage arising from it was the disguise of it, which I made my advantage of, for, though I walked much slower, I never once quitted the high road to hide myself, a thing which in the course of my journey had lost me a world of time and ground. Whenever I saw any people coming, whom I had any reason to suspect, I took off my hat and drew the hood of my cloak over my head and face, and passed without notice. A gentleman threw me a shilling out of one carriage which I passed; and I picked up several pennies from the charities of others. Many odd things happened to me as I went on, one, no very pleasant one, was, that when I stopped at a baker's shop to buy me a loaf of bread I found that the shilling which was thrown to me from the carriage aforesaid was not worth one farthing—that gentleman, be he who he might, deserved to have both his ears boxed: I shall know his face again if I see it ten years hence, for I received it so kindly that I took particular notice of his countenance.

When night came, though I tried at several places, I could get no other lodging than a barn. My appearance was such that nobody would trust my person in a bed; they called me an impudent slut for coming to ask for such a thing, and wondered what had come to me

to think of any other bed than straw! and if I had not stept aside pretty quickly I should have received the foot of one man, who had the word "lodgings" put up in his window, somewhere, for he kicked at me just as I turned with force enough to have killed a dog. "Well," said I to myself, "I must give up all farther thoughts of beds, I find," so, asking leave of a farmer to let me lie in his barn, I crept under a heap of straw and never slept better in my life. The next day I had not walked more than six miles before I was taken up upon suspicion of robbing a hen roost, and my bundle was opened in the eye of a worthy magistrate, whose name was Hardiman.

("I know him very well," said Old Crab, "but go on.")

Now nothing being found about me with feathers upon it, I was sent about my business with no other note of infamy but being called by his worship "a sturdy beggar." I said nothing was found about me with feathers on it, I ought to have excepted the moths, which were very much disturbed while a stout wench, who was fetched out of the kitchen, tumbled my garments about to look for pockets. In this place I was not only suspected of robbing others, but nothing could serve but I must be robbed myself, and that in the very presence of the worthy magistrate, for, when I came to look for the poor pittance of money which I had left upon calling at a baker's shop to buy me some bread, I found not one farthing in my bundle. The constable must have been the man who robbed me, for none meddled with my bundle but he, who was ordered by the justice to look into it: so, not being able to find any money, I was e'en forced to give the baker his loaf back, and go away without my bread. The man seemed

to pity me, for he saw the tears run down my face, but he put his loaf up on its shelf again. I stopped and begged at two or three good houses in this town, but could not get so much as a bit of broken victuals; and, if I had not made the best of my way out of it, I verily believe I should have got whipt; for Mr. Hardiman, who overtook me on horseback, and to whom I made my complaint of my being robbed in his very house, called me a lying harlot, those were his words, and added, that if I did not make the best of my way, he would send me to the House of Correction. (Old Crab laughed here.) This day I was almost starved. All that I had eaten, was a couple of turnips, when I came into the town where I got amongst my uncle's oxen, without knowing whose they were, till I saw John Mathers, and the shepherd, in the midst of them. I stood and stared at him some time before he saw me, when, presently, he came to look at an ox that was eating a bit of hay, which I had picked up and held to its mouth.

"John," said I, "don't you know me?"

(Old Comical interrupted her, which he would have done twenty times but for Old Crab, and said, "No, no, you didn't call me John; you called me 'an old toad,' beauty.")

"Silence!" quoth Old Crab.)

He knew me when I spoke, (continued Genevieve,) and the next question I asked him, was, if he had got any money in his pocket? I was hungry enough to rob any body! We should feel the force of the appetites ourselves before we blame others for doing violence to satisfy them. John was so glad to see me that I thought he would go mad; he ran to give some orders

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to the drovers, and brought me to an inn; I felt as if I could have eat the house, sign and all.

"What have you got in the larder?" said he, to the landlord; "I am come to order a small dinner for a lady who would be glad to eat a bit at your house;" upon which John ordered two courses of the nicest and the most expensive dishes that he could find in the bill of fare; and the gladness of the landlord's heart was expressed by the smiles on his countenance.

"What wines, Mr. Mathers?" said he.

"Burgundy, Champagne, Claret, and Madeira: your guest will be a lady of great taste, and one who always drinks the best; she is very neat in her liquors."

The landlord examined John's countenance, but all was serious in it; upon which he asked what time the dinner should be ready?

"The lady will dine this moment," said John; "here, waiter! a table-cloth, fire, and wax candles in the Sun this minute—the best linen—where's your mistress? If there's a spot upon it as big as a pin's head I fling the table-cloth into the fire, and you, neck and heels, into the horsepond."

Thus John ran on while I was getting starved to death for want of food, and, what was worse, standing close to the larder, and staring with eager eyes upon a variety of delicious viands that were already cooked, and only waited for the word of command to come to table. John, having given orders for a dinner made up of every delicacy that he could pick out, the expense of which had too much engaged the attention of the landlord for him to take any, the least, notice of me, who stood in a dark corner close by, it now growing late in

the evening, John called out, in a loud voice, "Light up! the lady is at the door!"

"All will be ready in a moment, Mr. Mathers," said the waiter; for John, it seems, had been long known at this house.

"All ready in a moment!" said John, "why, where are the rest of the wax candles?"

"The rest of the candles!" said the waiter, "will not two be enough for one lady?"

"Two candles enough, you great fool!" said John; "d'ye think a lady can eat her dinner in the dark?"

Upon which he set the two candles down, which he held in his hands, near enough to the place where I stood, to give the landlord a full view of my person and dress:—"You nasty beggarly slut," said he, coming up to me, "how dare you have the impudence to come into the house? Get out this moment!" upon which he raised his leg, and would have kicked me out of doors in a moment if John hadn't caught hold of it.

"What," said John, "will you kick your company out of your house?"

"Come, come, Mr. Mathers, we know you of old," said he, and was coming at me again; when John put his hand directly upon the landlord's mouth, and stopped another volley of abuse that was coming for me. I scarce knew what I had best do, whether leave all to John, or explain matters. I began by saying, that I was better than I appeared to be, but found it to be of little use to talk. The landlord, in spite of John, called me a liar, and bid me get into the street. I pitied the man for what he would feel when he came to know the truth, though, certainly, my ragged attire might very well make his excuses for calling me ill

names. However, I thought I had best let John alone, who soon gave the thing an odd turn, and made all matters easy between me and the landlord by a wink. The good man of the house, who knew that John could very well pay for any thing which he might order, had no objection to enjoy a joke at John's expense, upon which the landlord opened the door of the Sun, pulled off his hat in mockery, and ushered me into a very handsome room, where all had been prepared for dinner. Four wax candles stood burning upon the table, and two more on a sideboard. I had not seen myself in a glass of late, so I walked up to a very large one which hung in a convenient manner to show a gentlewoman her whole figure, and when I came before it I was struck with admiration.

John, who had made a fool of the landlord, and bade him keep it a secret, went out of the room to give some orders. The waiter, who had not the honour to know for whom he had been making such magnificent preparations, (for John had sent the best things they had into my room, and all the plate in the house lay, at that moment, within my reach) came in with a basket of bread in his hand. I was standing at the glass behind the door, and the man did not see me until I awakened his attention, by seizing a handful of bread out of his basket to appease my hunger, which was rather an agony than an appetite; upon which he started back as if he had seen a hobgoblin. He quite looked like a man who did not expect to see such a guest in the house; and, casting an eye of examination round the room to see if any of the plate were missing, asked me, with an air of the utmost indignation, how I dared to come into that room? He stretched out his hand, at first, as if he had

a mind to put me out of the house by the shoulders, but drew it in again as if he did not much like to touch me. I soon found that I stood in need of the name of some great man to protect me. I told the fellow he had best be quiet, for he had taken a poker in his hand to drive me out, and that Mr. Mathers would answer for my being in that room. Upon this he put down the poker, which I expected upon my back, went out, and left the door wide open, a civil hint for me to shut it if I pleased; when I heard a female voice of authority ask, "Waiter, is the lady come in yet? the dinner will soon be ready."

I thought they had made great haste with it, but found that John, in charity to my appetite, had selected such things for my table that would take the least time in the cooking. The waiter, upon the question being repeated, said, there was one lady come into the Sun, but was not quite sure if she were the right one. This answer presently brought in the landlady to me, who was willing to suit her attentions and politeness to the costliness of the dinner, which had filled her heart with raptures and her face with smiles—in she came with every thing that was lovely in a landlady about her, but the moment she saw me, all her graces fled in one moment.

"You dirty drab" said she, "how came you here? of all the impudent beggars I ever saw in the whole course of my life—"

"One word, madam," said I, "if you please, Mr. Mathers has invited me to dine with him, and has ordered the dinner, which I think I heard you say would soon be ready, upon my account."

The woman stared at me as if her eyes were

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opened for ever: "What," said she, "have I brought out all my best plate, my best glasses, my best service of china, my best linen, the best things in my larder, and turned my house bottom upwards for such a nasty stinking—"

"One word, madam," said I, again interrupting her, "you may say more to-day than you will be able to repent of to-morrow, you had best hold your tongue, and send your chambermaid here, I should be glad to be shewn into some room where I can wash my hands before the dinner comes in."

The woman seemed as if she thought there was something in my manner which did not quite suit my looks, and turning round, I heard her mutter as she went out, "The devil take Old Comical, this is one of his tricks, but I'll make him pay for it!"—and she went out bawling, "Chambermaid! here's the lady in the Sun would be glad to dress before dinner."

I had now another to encounter. In came the chambermaid as soon as she could get a clean cap and apron on, and expected to see something very fine to suit with the grand dinner and wines that had been bespoken, and the woman looked so much like a fool when she saw me that I fell a-laughing.

"I wish Old Comical were hanged," said the woman, "this is some of his fun."

"You jade," said I, "don't stand muttering there, show me into a bed-room, I want a basin and some water."

"Show the devil into a bed-room," said she, "for black as he is, he's a snow-ball to you!"—and turning round with an impudent f leer, ran into John's mouth, who came into the room at that instant.

"Aha, Polly," said John, "when you have jumped down my throat call out and tell me so!"

"If you go on at this rate, Mr. Mathers," said the chambermaid, "you'll soon fool away all your estate, great as it may be, bringing beggars into inns and treating them like gentlewomen—but so it always is with money, it runs away from a wise man and follows a fool."

"There's a good girl," said John, "you are come to see if the lady wanted any thing before dinner?"

"Why, John," said I, "I have asked for a basin of water, but cannot get it; the folks stare at me when I speak, as if I had horns and hoofs."

The woman seemed surprised at my calling him John, as if she thought I had taken a great liberty with the lord of the manor of Cock-a-doodle; but John put on a serious face and said if she would not show me what I wanted, he would not give her one farthing when he left the house in the morning.

"I wonder my mistress will suffer these things," said the wench with a saucy fling, and, walking first, beckoned me to follow her, which I did, and had the honour to be shewn what I wanted. I returned just in time to see the dinner procession: in came the landlord with the first dish, with a grin upon his face, in came the landlady with the next, winking at her husband, two waiters followed with other dishes, putting out their tongues at each other, both of which John kicked out of the room, and told them to get taught better manners. The smell of the dinner was delightful to one in my situation. I really ate like one that was almost starved, as in truth I was, and could not have staid so long if I had not eat all the bread which the waiter

brought into the room before dinner. The things were now put upon the table and the covers taken off the dishes. I took my seat at it, and a nice fried flounder upon my plate, and began to get very much engaged. Looking about for some sauce, John, whom I could not for a great while persuade to sit down with me, brought it to my chair. When kings and queens come to people's houses, masters and mistresses become servants to have the honour of waiting upon them. The presence of my very august person wrought the same effect upon the master and mistress of the inn, who both staid in the room to attend to my desires and commands, and see the fun. Every thing John did out of respect to me they took as a piece of mockery, and kept grinning and giggling together, till he was forced to tell them that if they did not behave better he would kick them both out of the room after the waiters. Every thing that was done carried an air of burlesque in it, though I could plainly see at times the landlord and landlady were a good deal puzzled, and scarce knew what to make of me; for some things dropped in conversation between John and me that they could hardly tell what to think of.

My manner of addressing them when I wanted any thing always made them stare, and I caught a whisper now and then, "How well the hussy acts her part"—and, "she plays it to admiration!"

I could plainly see, however, the longer they staid in the room the more serious they grew, eyeing me and John by turns with the utmost curiosity. When the second part of the dinner came in, the landlord, seeing one of the waiters making faces at the other, said to the fellow loud enough for me to hear him, "Tom, mind

what you are about, for I don't know whom we have got here."

The man stared, when I looked sternly at him and said, "When the rest of the servants get five shillings each, and you half-a-crown, you will find, when it is too late, that you have shown more impertinence than wit, sir."

As soon as the other things were put upon the table the landlord and his wife left the room with evident marks of uneasiness in their countenances, and while I was engaged in a delicious lemon pudding, and really every thing was very nice, the landlord came again into the room and begged to speak with John. The jest now took another turn, and the waiters, when I called for any thing, seemed in a fuss, threw things down and stammered if I asked a question; and I overheard one say to the other, "she is some great lady in disguise."

As soon as the people in the house grew serious, John, who has no objection to a joke, put off a grave face and assumed a merry one, and puzzled them almost as much this way as he had done the other. But this would not do long, they had seen and heard too much of me to be persuaded any longer that I was a beggar girl. The abuse which they had given me and ill language stuck sadly in their stomachs, and John and his host had like to have come to a serious reckoning upon it; for, upon hearing a loud talking, I opened the door of the Sun, and, putting out an ear, heard the landlord say, "You will be the ruin of my house, Mr. Mathers."

"The ruin of a fool's head," said John.

"I can take a jest," said the landlady, for poor John had got them both about his ears, "I can take a jest,"

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said the landlady, "as well as any body, and that you know, for this isn't the first fool's game you have played here by a score, but give me leave to tell you, Mr. Mathers, that you shall not come here to hurt my house, and get me into hot water with my customers—I am sure she is some lady of fashion, by her manners—what! d'ye think I don't know a woman of fashion when I see one, ha, Mr. Mathers? I would defy a duchess, put on what filthy rags she would, to hide herself from me, that's what I would."

Upon which, John, after having crowed three or four times like a cock, loud enough to drown both their voices, said, "O yes, an't please your grace, I dare say you would, and abuse her, just as you did the lady in the Sun by way of proving it: if you knew her to be a woman of fashion why did you abuse her, and call her a 'dirty drab,' for those were your words, answer me that, Madam Cackle!"

"I am the least to blame of the two," said the landlord.

"So you are, Dominie," said John, "and I'll tell you the reason why, the lady told you to your fool's head she was better than she looked to be, and you very politely called her a liar. Madam Petticoats-uppermost here, your wife, was never let so far into the secret."

"Come, Mr. Mathers," said the landlord, "we are both very much to blame, and you more than all the rest put together."

"I to blame," said John, braying like an ass first in the ear of mine host and then of mine hostess, loud enough to strike them deaf, "you are a couple of asses; didn't I bespeak claret, champagne, madeira, and the burgundy with the dessert—didn't I order wax tapers

and the best room in the house?—didn't I order cod and fried flounders and shrimp sauce at the top, a couple of roasted chickens at the bottom, a fricassee on one side and a haricot on the other, besides fiddle-faddle-aro's for corner dishes?—didn't I order tarts and jellies, custards and blow-monge, scald-codlings and cream, the devil's tail and pickled cucumbers for the second course? hah, you thick-skulled old scoundrel, and tipped you the wink into the bargain, hah? and you not to find out that you had a countess in the house, you beef-headed old fool!"

"A countess!" cried the landlord.

"A countess!" cried the landlady; "we're ruined and undone!—what have I said?"

"Why," said John, "you called her a nasty stinking dirty drab! that was what you said, for I stood in the corner of the Sun to hear you pay your compliments to your company."

"But why in the name of heaven didn't you tell us she was a countess?" said the landlord.

"Nay," said John, "you stopped me there, for if you would not believe the lady herself when she went no farther than to tell you that she was better than she looked to be, what could I expect if I called her countess, when you called her a liar to her face?—nay, more than that, if I had not caught you by the leg which was coming foot and all at her ladyship's bottom, you would have kicked her"—

"Well," said the landlord, "it is of no use for us to stand gaping at one another here, we had best go directly into the Sun, and make our pollygees."

"Aye," said John, "ye have played the fool all day, 'tis time ye grew wise at night." Upon which John

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introduced them with a hundred grimaces, and they certainly looked very much like two fools.

"We are come," said they, "to beg your ladyship's pardon, and if your ladyship has been pleased," said the landlady, "to put your jest upon us poor folks, we hope your ladyship will take what has been said to your dress and not to your ladyship's person."

I said, "When folks did any thing wrong they certainly could but beg pardon, and that I was satisfied."

Here matters might have ended very well, but this comical old toad must needs have another joke, and I think he was almost out of his wits with joy to have found me. When tea and coffee were ordered, (I have not time, or words, to tell you how I eat and drank, and enjoyed all these luxuries, for such they really were to me after my hardships and abstinence,) John went out into the bar, and, calling the chambermaid, gave orders for a large bed, and very particular instructions how he would have it made.

"What!" said the landlady, "her ladyship is not your wife, is she?"

"My wife! no," said John, "and what of that?"

"What of that," said the landlady, coming into the bar, for, hearing an angry voice, I stepped to the door to listen, "What of that! Why, sir, you don't think I will suffer such things in my house; who, or what is this woman; and what do you take my house for? you are carrying your jokes a little too far, Mr. Mathers, will you blast the name"—

"Hold hard at that," said John; "you have made yourself fool enough to-day to content any one moderate person; tell the chambermaid to do as I bid her, that's all—there's another wink for you—make the best

of that, t'other was thrown away, and such winks as mine are not always to be had—mind that, old boy.”

Upon which he began squalling like two cats at each other, and so loud that I expected a mob. In came the landlady, presently, to me, with a fiery face, and scarcely any breath, and said Mr. Mathers had let the cat out of the bag.

“He must have let more than one out,” said I, “by the noise.”

“I am come to tell you, madam,” said she, sticking her hands in her sides, “we will harbour none of his women here: I had a suspicion that my house would not be much the better for your company, now it is out, my lady!”

“Indeed!”

“Yes, you’re a woman of a pretty quality!”

I had laughed so much already that I could scarce laugh any longer, but the poor woman was in such a fuss that I could not help laughing at her. This put her past all patience, and I really expected that she would have fallen into fits. I told her that I had overheard what had been said, and that she was made a jest of. She said she would get Old Comical well cudgelled, and put me into the stocks. John, seeing the landlady come into my room, disengaged himself from the landlord, and ran after her, and asked her what she came into the Sun for; and what ailed her; and whether a man could not bespeak a bed in her house, without setting it on fire? She turned at him like a fury, and said, “She could be glad to see the house in flames sooner than have such things done in it!”

“What,” said John, “what things done in it? I told the chambermaid to put the bed at bottom, and the

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mattress at the top, two swandown pillows one upon the other, and curl the bolster underneath them to raise them a little, to put two blankets under the body, and three over and above it, and then take another blanket, and, folding it up half way up the body, tuck all the rest in at the feet at arm's length, to keep the wind from getting in, and the feet from getting out, and this for tall bodies, short ones having no need; for if the short body keeps its head upon the pillow, the feet will not reach to poke their way out below, and hang dangling down over the valance: furthermore, I gave orders that the sheet below should be brought underneath the bolster and then lapt over it, and then under it again, and pinned in at the corners, and that the sheet above should not be brought over so far at the doubling of the bed clothes, and then turned down so devilishly low just as if the outside of the bed was the fit place for the sheet, making as if there was so much sheet to spare, when there remains nothing at all to tuck in at bottom; so if a body catches up one's foot in the night with the cramp, up comes the sheet along with it, and then a turn or two shrivels it all up underneath one's body, and what one foot has done amiss two cannot mend, for no poking or kicking will put the sheet in its place, but the legs come directly upon the rough blanket—there's the mischief; I gave orders that the upper sheet should not be turned down so far by three quarters of a mile, for I would not have it done, nor the bed bundled up under the mattress at the sides, so as to leave a trench in the middle: I had as lieve lie in a ditch as in a bed made in this manner! And pray, madam, what harm was there in all that? Can't a man have a bed made to his liking without lighting your brimstone, Mrs Cackle? I know

the lady's will and pleasure, and how she likes to be put into a bed and lie on it when she is put into it, and gave orders accordingly."

"It is nothing to me how folks have their beds made," said she, "if no wrong thing be done in them after they are made."

"Wrong thing! what has the woman got in her head," said John, "are you so apt to do wrong things yourself, that you can't help suspecting other people? If I had bespoke a bed for old Satan, and gave the chambermaid her instructions how to make it for him, you might have made less disturbance. I can't think what the devil is come to the woman, for my part! Beds have been made in an inn before now, and folks have slept in them too, without having the house turned out o' window—ye shall none of ye tuck me up, however, in this house to-night, for Master Danvers, the cow-doctor, promised me a bed and asked me to sup with him;" upon which John wished me a good night, and hoped I should find my bed made to my liking,—adding, that he would call on me the next morning and see me safe to Oaken Grove.

"Then you don't intend to sleep here to-night, Mr. Mathers?" said the landlady, with an air of surprise.

"Never thought of it," said John, and away he went.

"Then I wish you were hanged," said she, looking after him, "with all my heart, for making us think so."

Upon which she turned to me, and began to make more apologies;—I stopt her, by saying, that having known John so long as she seemed to do, I was astonished at her not being more upon her guard against him; and, ordering some eggs for my supper, I begged to be shown my apartment, where I found my bed made

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just as I used to have it at home, however John came to know my way, when I got into it and slept till eight o'clock the next morning. Upon counting the clock I put on my rags for the last time, for I hope I shall never come to rags any more, and, returning to my parlour, found a bright fire in it, and all things set in order for my breakfast, for John had come before I was risen, and had got every thing ready for me. While we were at breakfast, a post-chaise and four came out, which, upon inquiry, I found to be got ready for me; upon which John paid the bill, and distributed, by my order, a guinea amongst the servants. Observing a crowd of people getting about the door, who had heard, I suppose, of the strange woman at the Bell, I made haste to the chaise, and drove away amidst a loud laugh raised at my expense. But when they saw Old Comical get upon his horse and gallop away after me, they were not much at a loss to guess at the matter, for he had cracked a joke in that town before to-day. Thus, my dear friends, I made my escape, and such an escape that few ever made besides myself, except distressed damsels in novels and romances.

It was now getting late, Old Crab and his wife, and Old Comical returned to the farm, and the rest of the company to their respective apartments.

We have now laid before our readers this very extraordinary matter, which was not only taken from Genevieve's own mouth, but submitted to her for her correction before it was put to the press. The many stories which are gone forth upon this subject, we now expect and trust, will fall into discredit, and the true

one only be told. We hope to be excused the making any commentaries either upon this, or Julia's affair, since the true account of both these black acts are now laid before the public, and published by order of the family.

It may not come amiss in this place, just to observe that the chief design of this work is the vindication of the people concerned in it. This has been already hinted, it is true, but it may not be unimportant to press it again on the reader's recollection, who, not knowing any thing of this family, may look for the artful construction of a romance, and set, at the same time, the grand object out of sight. We beg to say we pretend to no skill in romance, but certainly are able to tell the truth as well as any the most celebrated writers in the world. If others had done the same, we might have been spared this trouble; but, to tell the truth, and make a fuss about it, may get it called in question. It would have been well for us and the world if falsehood had always shared the same fate. Vindications and defence of persons and families are seldom read out of the small circle of friends and acquaintance; the world at large is sure to hear the lie, but the truth is left to whisper in a corner. We have, therefore, taken the advantage of the prevailing taste for romance reading, and dished up this work as well as we could to suit the said taste, and by that means to get the main object of it into a more general circulation: twenty will take a novel home with them before one will put a dry statement of facts in his pocket. Let the reader take this for a novel if he pleases; if we can get him to read it our end is answered: if he never has heard of this family it is no reason why he never

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may; and, if he should, he has read our defence when he might think that he only read a novel, and can speak a word for us if he sees any abuse put upon us. We do not pretend to be without faults, but are content with what we have got, and must beg to be excused the taking at other people's hands more than come to our share.

CHAPTER XV

Old Crab and Mr. Decastro set out upon a journey—Genevieve upon another

WHEN Mr. and Mrs. Decastro had retired to their apartment, they talked about Frederick for three hours before they went to bed. Sometimes they comforted themselves with a thought, that the wound which he received from Genevieve might not be a mortal one; that he might yet live to repent of his ill ways and doings, and go out of the world as a man and as a christian. One observed, that, if he was killed, divine vengeance, which sometimes comes upon wicked men in this world, struck the blow, and Genevieve was made the instrument. Then the other would say, it were pity he had not been spared a little longer—it was subjoined, that he might then have done more mischief, and gone out of the world a worse man than he did. Thus Mr. and Mrs. Decastro run on, sometimes talking, and sometimes weeping, over one who at the best deserved but a halter. Before they went to bed they came to a determination to have matters looked into, and Mr. Decastro said he would go himself and take Old Crab with him if he could get him to come to his mind: and, if Frederick were dead, give orders for his remains to be brought and deposited in the old family vault at Oaken Grove. Upon this resolution they went to bed, but their minds were too much disturbed and agitated upon this dreadful affair to take any rest, they

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lay rolling and tumbling about until the servant came to call them at the usual hour the next morning.

When they arose, the first thing which was done was to send a message to Old Crab, who came at breakfast, and after making some objections to such a scoundrel as Frederick being put into the family vault, consented to go with Mr. Decastro, as directed by Genevieve, to Frederick's habitation on the banks of the river Dee: having prepared matters accordingly, they set out the next day. Genevieve, eager of course to see her husband, was preparing, too, for a journey to Oxford, a thing which was, as it were like enough it should be, very much opposed by all her friends. He might come to her, they all said, in safety, but she could, by no means, go in safety to him. No advice, however, no entreaties, not even tears, and many were shed by Julia especially, could moisten the cement that stuck her to her purpose; and, though the very road on which she had just made such dangerous escapes lay in her way, she had so set her heart upon flying into the arms of her husband, that she could not wait even for an express to be sent to Oxford to bring him immediately to Oaken Grove. After Julia and Mrs. Decastro, who had the most weight with her, had, by common desire, done every thing in their power to dissuade her from this thing in vain, they prevailed upon her to take a very strong guard with her if she must needs go, and begged that John Mathers might be one, and he be left to choose another, upon which Old Comical chose Tom Hogmore, Old Crab's drover, a most tremendous fellow, who looked more like a castle than a human being.

After breakfast Genevieve and Julia walked to the cottage to see her old nurse, who was so overjoyed at

the sight of her mistress that she fell in a fit. Genevieve found every thing at her house just as she had left it, except old nurse in a fit, for such had been Acerbus's desire. Her two men servants had been discharged; but they came again to their old mistress as soon as they heard of her return. Having given her directions at her cottage, she ran to the castle to take leave of her friends; and, after abundance of tears and good wishes, Genevieve ordered four post horses to be put to her own carriage, Old Comical and Tom Hogmore well armed upon the box, and away she went, upon a full gallop, for the university of Oxford.

Now, having put all these good folks upon the road, we will just give the reader a hint of matters as they stood with the good folks at the castle, and then carry him to Oxford to see how matters stood with the philosopher. He knew nothing, as yet, of the recovery of his lovely bride, who had been snatched from his arms a few hours after he had led her to the altar. The master of the house, from which Old Comical rescued Julia, had turned evidence against Sir John Lamsbroke, who left the kingdom to escape the vengeance of Old Crab. This came upon a quarrel with Sir John, who imputed Julia's escape to his connivance. Lady Budemere had scarcely left the castle for a week since the earl's death, and this upon account of the very great friendship which subsisted between Mrs. Decastro and the countess. Mr. and Mrs. Grove divided their time between Hindermark, the castle, and their son's cottage in the meadow, where George and Julia had some time since taken up their abode, and did nothing but walk and talk and kiss and set flowers. The same things coming over and over again so often, it was a

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wonder they were not tired of them. Their honeymoon had been past and gone some time, but, whether by good economy, or because they had so much, they had not time to eat it all, they had a vast deal of honey left.

Mrs. Decastro was now preparing for her annual visit in London, which she had never missed but once, when she was laid up with the gout, and could not move hand or foot. This was enough to satisfy any body's conscience that no contempt, or quarrel with the gay city, came into the account, or disrespect, by no means, for she went once there and carried the gout along with her to shew what she could do for its sake. She was a very good woman, however, a few foibles excepted, and made Mr. Decastro a very excellent wife after her conversion to Christianity; thanks be to Old Crab for that, to whom they owed, and to whom they ascribed, all their comforts and happiness, for he it was that made them christians; and who can be truly happy without being so, at least as far as the conditions upon which man receives his existence will allow? If you are not one, reader, try and see what it is to be one, for even Old Comical used to say that he never had been so merry in his life as he was when Old Crab made one of him; and the journey which he took, when he got possession of what his father had left him, to pay every body whom he had robbed and cheated, had more merriment in it than any other passages in his life. When first Old Crab went to work to make a good man of him, Old Comical said he didn't know what ailed him, for the first thing he did was to go and pay a man whom he had robbed of a fat goose, and he grew so merry upon it, as soon as he had done it, that he

laughed all the way home again as if he had been tickled—

Well, thus stood matters at the castle when Mrs. Decastro, Lady Budemere, and their servants all set off for London, and left the old towers to shift for themselves; yes, left the old towers to shift for themselves, for a thing had now happened which had not happened for many years; the old castle was for a time forsaken. Lady Budemere was a fine woman, and if forty years could make a finer thing of her, forty years of age she then was, when she broke out upon the town in all the splendour of a gay widow. She had a jointure, thanks to Old Crab, of five thousand pounds a-year, and what powder is to shot money is to a woman; for very few will go off, to use the world's expression, without it! Now her ladyship felt malice enough against the men to have a month's mind to another husband; some may think it no excuse for doing wrong, but her marriage with the late earl was a matter of downright force, and her gayeties, we think, are to be put to the account of those who fettered her against her will to a man whom she did not like; and to the same score may be set her gallantries with the man whom she did. This affair, which we know we cannot talk away, gave the late earl very little trouble. He even knew it before any crime had been committed, and might have prevented it if he had not held a certain precious compensation in his eye, which kept matters from taking the air in court. This, however, was the only false step which Lady Budemere was known to make; and if a forced and cruel match, and the worst of usage from her husband after it, can come as an united excuse for an unfortunate person, we must beg

to bring it in Lady Budemere's case. The man for whom she sacrificed her reputation was at this time in town, and a widower, so, what might come, wise ones might think they saw. Now what amends a marriage with this man might make her reputation must be left to the said wise ones to determine. Old Crab once said, which is no little authority, that he thought she was sorry for what she had done, but added, not so sorry but, if she were tempted, she might be glad to do the like again. Old Crab, however, was always more in earnest when he spoke well of any one than when he spoke ill. It may come well enough amongst these desultory observations to say, that he thought Genevieve acted right in stabbing her cousin Frederick, even if he fell dead at her foot, which she had every reason to think he did, for he lay without sense or motion while she tried to draw the knife out of his side to defend herself against the rest, whom she expected to have upon her in a moment; and that, too, if she had not been shot at by him; he was of opinion that she was called upon by the duty which she owed to herself, by the law of self-defence, to do what she did, for a rape was clearly intended, and she acted like a woman of courage as amazing as her escape was wonderful.

Now, reader, if we did but know what your stomach served for, whether to follow Old Crab and Mr. Decastro to the banks of the Dee, run on before Genevieve and see what the philosopher is doing at Oxford, and that would be no easy matter, for she gallops apace, giving the same orders to the post-boys as Juliet, who could not be in a greater hurry for her heart, did to the horses of the sun—

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Gallop apace, ye fiery-footed steeds!
Bring night! Bring Romeo!—SHAKESPEARE.

or visit the gay metropolis with Mrs. Decastro and her party, and see a place into which it would be loss of time for any devil to come to tempt folks to sit, we would put the right dish upon the table. But as this is a question which we are not like to get answered, we must e'en try if we cannot hit the right nail on the head in the dark, and many a blow hath been struck to good purpose in it, before any man was born with a hammer in his hand.

Well, sad Acerbus, we'll begin with thee. Look, reader, there he sits in Merton college library, with the Phædon of Plato opened before him, calling upon the sublimest of all the philosophers to disattach his soul from all this world can give, or rather lend, for what is there that a man can call his own in it? If a man could call any thing his own in it, one would think he might call his wife his own in it, but what signifies what a man calls a thing if he cannot keep it? Poor Acerbus was looking into Plato to see if he could find anything to stop the bleeding of the heart! Tear after tear falls down and spots his book, arguments arise which Plato cannot answer to prove how strong grief is, and how weak philosophy, even when put against it with such force as his. That man's life must be a very uncommon one, who ever found that he had more philosophy than he wanted in this world. Poor Acerbus found now to his cost his all was too little, and that its powers were somewhat overrated by such as held it out as an extinguisher of sorrow, that would put it out all at once as a man puts out a candle. Acerbus, too, found to his cost that the flame of love was not so easily to be put

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out, nor so like to burn out of itself, as a candle will do if a man lets it alone, nor could he blow it out with his sighs, for the more, poor fellow, he blew the fire that way, the fiercer it would burn! Acerbus found another thing to his no small surprise, viz., that the arguments which he had used in the case of others, in poor Julia's for instance, whom he used to try his skill upon, were of no use in his own, that there was something in severe sorrows that baffled all their ingenuity, that do what they could, they still left the thorn in his side! that it would fester there, too, in spite of the philosopher and his philosophy put together. He found, in sad truth, that however folks might laugh at love in others, it was no such laughing matter when it came to their turn to feel it in themselves. A man may "jest at scars who never felt a wound," let him jest that has. Acerbus was a young man, and he had taken up a notion that he was armed at all points out of the stores of the old philosophers against any attack of human calamities, but he was now taught a new lesson, viz., that philosophy can not only not prevent a wound, but is but ill able to assuage the pain of one when it comes. Poor Acerbus! his disappointment in this matter added to his grief: he called his philosophy a jilt, that had promised much indeed, but done little but break her promises!

"How can this thing be?" said he; "if philosophy is an arrant cheat, how came men to be cheated so long by it? If it is not, why am I as I am? Either it has a power to detach a man from the cares and concerns of the world, or it has not; if it has not, how came such a liar not to be long since exploded? If it has, are there not some hopeless cases? and is not mine one? Or

are its medicines slow in operation? has not time a great deal to do in the thing, as much as philosophy itself, going shares, perhaps a full half, in the cure? If I argue this way, and say, what we cannot keep we must expect to lose one time or another, comes not this lovely woman, now for ever gone, under this condition? Knowing this, and I knew it well when she was given to me, how came I not to be better prepared to receive her, than to suffer such agonies at her loss? yes, but how could I be, and love her as I loved her? if I had taken her and not loved her, I could have given her up upon easy terms: if I had taken her and not loved her, I should have broken my promise at the altar; if I kept my promise at the altar and loved her as I promised, how could I lose her, and not grieve at her loss? So the better I kept my promise the worse was it for me; for the more I loved her the more I must needs grieve for her death. If I had not made my promise good I should have committed a very great fault and must grieve that way; if I had made it good and lost that which I promised to love, and did love, I must needs grieve the other—what shall we say then? Is it good to marry and come into this dilemma? But how can I make my escape? I feel like one tied to some bloody stake, and not only live under the scourge, but feel it more sensibly every day than other. I have not the common advantage of one that is beaten, I do not grow callous under the blows, my sense quickens as my punishment goes on, and every wound I feel gives me more pain than the last!—A man that is in love is laughed at for a fool, and his pains are made a jest of—no jest more common—that is as much as to say that the pains he feels are either his choice or his fault, he might have

avoided them if he would, or not felt them if he pleased, or why is he a jest? But how far does this hold good? is to love a worthy and a beautiful woman to put a propensity, surely not given to lie useless, to a wrong use? or are our passions set, just like so many traps, to catch us and vex us? Well, my lovely kinswoman, once my wife, I will quarrel with philosophy if it bids me not to grieve for thee—nay, it may bid its heart out and I still must grieve and love! But by what rule in its fine code of laws can I forget thee? thy worth, thy beauty, thy true love for me? How often have I seen thee gaze at me when thou didst not know I saw thee! How often seen thy lovely bosom heave, and breathe a sigh though meant for me, not meant for me to know!—Those speaking eyes of thine—cursed be the waters that have quenched their fires—false to thy heart, told me the secret, how much interest I had in it; I felt and opposed their force, I confess it, 'till I knew thou lovedst me: But, when thou as good as askedst me for what I had not to give, for you had my heart already, 'Alas, Plato,' said I, 'you could guard my bosom against my brother Frederick's pistol, but not against the eyes of my sweet cousin Genevieve.' Ah Genevieve, now nothing but a name, untasted beauty! whither art thou gone?—I would, and yet I would not have thee know how much I mourn thy loss.—How can this be? Why, it is thus—I would have thee know how I grieve for thee, because thou wouldst be glad to know how much I loved thee, and yet I would not have thee know how much I mourn thy loss, because it would make thee sad to see me so sad. And yet if thou wert not sad because I was so, I should be more sad, because I should think thou didst not love me as well as I love thee, and

yet I would have thee happy too, O most happy, and if thou'rt sad at all, thou must needs be unhappy in proportion as thou art sad, and yet if thou knewest I was not sad at thy loss, thou wouldst be so at such a sign of my great want of love.—But if our love be equally great, how can we be parted by death and be happy too? and how can it possibly be, if one should know that the other is not happy? so we must both be happy and unhappy at the same time, or else we shall neither of us be pleased with the other. O, but I am very miserable the while and can get no help: one wise man tells me that it is of no use to grieve for that which grief will not restore; another wise man says that no wise man ever grieves at all for any thing at all; another wise man says that there is no one thing in this world worth a man's pains to grieve for; another wise man says that grief is nothing but opinion; another says that grief is a fault that ought to be mended; Plato says this world is nothing but a heap of copies, pictures of divine originals, and that none but a fool would set his heart upon the impression instead of the seal—alas! alas! if my folly equals but my grief, how great a fool am I! One wise man being told that he had lost both his sons in battle, answered, 'Well, and what of that?—I knew when I had them that I must part with them!' very true, but he never told us what he felt for their loss; no, that he kept to himself, and who knows what he kept to himself? A man who sits at his case, and feels no pain, may talk, and finely too, about the command of the passions when they all lie fast asleep, but let him change bosoms with me for a moment and make no wry faces, if he can. Put a man in my case, O sad, sad, too sad!—let him lose a beautiful

woman whom he loved, and who made matters ten times worse by loving him again, let him lose her, as I did my sweet Genevieve, on her wedding-day, as yet a virgin, before the setting of the nuptial sun. Let him be a man of my age, one as much in love as I, his heart made of the same sensibilities, a man of my taste who could not love one woman in ten thousand, which must still aggravate the loss, making it the less likely to be repaired, now let him, with such a grief as this, made up of all these ingredients so deadly bitter, and others which I could add if it were not bitter enough already, let him, I say, give us a cast of his office as philosopher, put off his grief as a man would put off his gloves if he could.—To suffer is a property of human nature, and let any man separate it from its subject if he can; to cease to suffer is to cease to be a man; we are made on purpose to feel pain both in mind and in body, as much as an harpsichord is made on purpose to sound, when touched; when no longer touched, we no longer feel pain. But here the comparison dies, we may be touched and make no noise, and then we may be called philosophers.—Many months are now past since I received this wound, and time, so far from healing it, has made it worse; the pain of it has brought a fever into the constitution. Poor Julia! I need no longer ask the question what you felt—I can now answer it—aye—to my sad cost can I!”

Now, reader, we must tell thee for thy comfort, for we think thy kind heart must ache for poor Acerbus, we must tell thee, that Harry Lamsbroke, who had met Genevieve coming in a great hurry to Merton college to find her husband, knowing where he was, for he had not long since left him sitting over a book in the

college library, brought her to the library, and, opening the door softly, introduced her and went about his business, for, perhaps, he might think husband and wife were best left together. Poor Acerbus was sitting in a corner, quite out of sight of any who entered the library, in a favourite corner where he had spent many a sad hour and shed many a tear unseen, so that Genevieve heard him talking to himself before she saw him, yes, had stood behind a book-case, and had heard every word which we have faithfully recorded, and how she could contain herself so long were a wonder, with such ardent affections that must have been not a little inflamed by what she had heard him say:—ah, but a lady loves to hear herself praised, and more especially by the man she loves—that kept the panting Genevieve so quiet. Poor Acerbus little thought at the moment what lady stood throbbing within a book's length of him. Thus it happens in matters of this world—be not so impatient, reader, to have these two fond things brought together—thus it happens in matters of this world, when plunged into the gulfs and depths of wo, we little know how near some help may be at hand!—Old Comical said something like this, when sitting under a hay-cock one day, and wanting sadly to sneeze, not having so much as one pinch of snuff left him, Madam Funstall, coming all on a sudden behind him to his aid, seeing him fumbling in an empty box, put her's over his shoulder full of noble strasburg, just beneath his nose.—There was a situation, reader!—But not like this in the library.

There stood the lovely Genevieve biting her lips, with one hand pressed upon her swelling bosom, scarce able to contain its tumults. Let us look into it, reader,

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and see what warm things were in it; first, there was a warm curiosity to hear what Acerbus would say of her; then there was a warm desire to be praised and adored by him; then there was a delight to be got so near her husband, which was very warm, moreover there was her love, which was very warm indeed; add to which her impatience, which was the warmest thing of all, to run into his arms.—Now a lady's bosom with all these warm things in it, however snowy it might be on the outside, must have contained very odd sort of snow if it had any within that was not fairly boiled down: very well,—now Acerbus was going on with his soliloquy, sometimes in verse and sometimes in prose, for he was half way out of his wits, poor fellow, so it is no wonder that he was getting a little poetical, for all poets are beside their wits—he was going on with his soliloquy, as we were saying, which we interrupted, with good excuse, we hope, when it was to put the lovely Genevieve close to his elbow.

“No, Julia,” said he, “I need not ask the question, what you felt for the loss of George Grove, when your sad heart was breaking; mine, my agonized bosom aches an answer! But to feel pain to no purpose in the world, for my true love is lost, for ever lost, what brings it to account?—Genevieve herself, sweet, sweet name!—Genevieve herself, if she stood at my elbow and saw me weep, saw my tears thus fall in vain for her, heard my sad sighs breathed from a breaking heart;”—(poor Acerbus! here he was forced to stop some time to sob and weep)—“saw me sit thus alone in this melancholy corner mourning for her who never can return, would she not say, My dear Acerbus weep no more for me?”

“My dear Acerbus!” exclaimed Genevieve, running into his arms, “my dear Acerbus, weep no more for me!”

How a man feels when he is struck with a thunder-bolt, reader, must be left to him who has ever felt such a *soft* sensation to say, if he chance to survive the stroke; but if he and Acerbus were to have compared notes, we will venture to say that their feelings would have been very like one another's in many things, except that one man is knocked down with a hard stone, and the other comes in contact with the soft bosom of a pretty woman:—To proceed with the comparison; great and sudden joys, like great and sudden blows, stun a man, beat his sense and his breath out of his body. Acerbus was just in this situation, and was forced to wait until his senses returned before he could feel any joy at all at having his Genevieve come so strangely to life again, and safe and warm in his bosom. If Homer now, or Shakespeare, or Milton, had found it their business to have described this meeting, they certainly would have broken out into more similes upon this great occasion. Now, no matter for quality if we can bear a hand with them in quantity—put down simile for simile as long as they have a farthing left in their pockets—if copper against gold, no matter.—Genevieve felt the most pleasure at first because she was prepared for it, and had stood whetting her appetite for a quarter of an hour together; but Acerbus's joy came on by degrees, like the—like the—like the—morning, we would say, if we could make any thing of it. It comes on by degrees, thus, videlicet, first there is the twilight, and then the dawn, then comes the sun in all his glory forth; then there is, to gather another

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simile off a fruit tree, the bud, the blossom, and the delicious peach—that is step by step work again, like Acerbus's joy. Now the moon comes into our heads, there is the first quarter, and then the second quarter, and then the third quarter, and then the full-cheeked moon shows her broad face at once! Now, to mortise all these similes into the subject,—so Acerbus, still as he came to his senses, felt his joys increase upon him little by little, like the swelling tide, until he had like to have been drowned in pleasure!

“O my dearest, dear husband!” said Genevieve, as soon as she could speak for ecstasy, and for kisses—and surely there can be no harm in a wife kissing her husband—“are you not extremely surprised at seeing me here?”

Now Acerbus could not see her, for it is possible for a thing to be too near a man's eyes to be seen, as Genevieve was at that moment.—“O my most dear beloved love!” said he, holding her off a little to stare at her sweet face, with smiling lips, and blushing cheeks, and sparkling eyes illumined,—“indeed my wonder is inexpressible!”

The wonder indeed would have been greater if he could have spoken another word at that moment, or for a great many moments after it, for Genevieve and he fell to kissing again; and so we must e'en leave them alone, for what can be done with them? But we should make some apology to the ladies for talking so much about kissing, because it is a thing of all others that none of them like. But if husbands and wives were to take example from Acerbus and Genevieve, kiss one another more and quarrel less, the world, perhaps, would be a good deal the better for it, and the

lawyers the worse—that indeed would be a pity. It is but just to say, in this place, though we are sorry to say it, that Acerbus and Genevieve set a *rare* example to the world of conjugal affection and fidelity. Though they certainly ate a great deal of honey in the first honey-moon there was always some left in the honey-pot, which is a sign that they did not eat it all at once, and leave none for another day, as some do, and get sick. During this fond scene, which we suppose none can blame, for there was nothing but innocence in it, unless it is for its innocence, for some can relish none but vicious pleasures, and naturally enough hate innocence because they love the devil, during this scene the old warden of Merton college walked into the library to consult Aristotle's "Organon" upon some knotty point, when he came on a sudden upon our young couple, who were too much taken up with each other to look for old wardens.

"Mr. Decastro!" said the old man, looking at him and Genevieve through his spectacles, for he could not very well see one without seeing the other, "are you not ashamed of yourself to be taken in this shocking situation with a woman sitting on your lap? Is your temperance, your modesty, your chastity, so long talked of, so long exhibited as a pattern in the university, come to this?"

Genevieve leaped out of her husband's arms almost, though not quite, so quick as she leaped into them!

"Sir," said Acerbus, "either I am doing wrong or right, if right no harm is done; if wrong a man is to blame for embracing his own wife. This lady, whom you have caught in my arms, is that dear wife you have heard me say I had lost, she is but this moment come

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to me, but how, or whence, or by what strange means, I am as yet to learn, for she has not had time as yet to tell me her story."

Upon this the old warden made his bow to Genevieve, who, it must needs be confessed, was in a pretty fluster to be introduced to such a venerable old gentleman. Her hat lay upon the ground, and her coal-black locks were scattered in a pretty confusion over her face, neck, and shoulders. The good old warden felt an unusual glow at the sight of so much beauty; he shook her and Acerbus by the hands, and could not refrain from giving them a hearty blessing.

"She is a peerless dame, indeed," said the old gentleman, "but, let her be as good as she is beautiful, and she will do much if she can deserve you, Mr. Decastro, whose example, I fear, will now be lost to the university; I must beg to see you, before you leave Oxford, sir, I have a small present to offer you in token of my very great esteem and value for one of the brightest patterns of scholarship and virtue that I ever remember to have seen in this place." Upon which Genevieve and Acerbus hurried out of the library, and retired to the Angel Inn, where she had left her old nurse, who came with her, and her other attendants.

The ladies, perhaps, will want to know how Genevieve was dressed; we can tell them a little about the matter—she had on a cottage hat, which was tied under the chin with white satin ribands; a white muslin gown which looked a little puckered when she came out of the library; white silk stockings, and black satin shoes with silver fringes. Had she any thing round her neck?—yes, besides her husband's arm, she had a blue riband, to which was suspended a diamond star

with twelve rays, which looked as it lay upon her white bosom just as if it were dropped upon frozen milk. Round her waist, besides her husband's other arm, she wore a small golden cord enriched with two little tassels of pearl, hanging in a pretty knot below the smallest part of it: and this is all we know about this thing—she had some petticoats on, however, but how many, and what they were made of, we cannot tell; she never wore any stays, but a waist-coat, which was made to button close to her shape, a much better thing and more wholesome. Well, she took her husband to the inn, and having ordered a dinner to be got ready at half past four o'clock, she and her husband came close to a good fire, and Genevieve, fondly taking her seat upon her husband's knee, and putting one arm over his shoulder, told him her story, which the reader has already heard.

Genevieve's journey to Oxford was a very pleasant one, the frost had continued, and her wheels ran like a whirlwind. She met with no sort of interruption on the road where she had the most expected it. She stopped at the inn where she had liked to be kicked out into the street both by master and servants, and, as soon as she was known, had as many pardons begged her as she could find to give. They held out, however, for every body had one that asked for it, but she still left her ragged figure a riddle amongst them. She next stopped at the kind old woman's house where she had her clothes stolen, and making her a present of ten guineas, settled thirty pounds a-year upon the poor wretch for her life.

Now, reader, we will take another peep into the Angel Inn, knocking at the door first to show our civility and precaution, before we break in upon Genevieve

and Acerbus, as it is fit we should. Genevieve had now finished her narrative, which sufficiently kept the philosopher's eyes open; and he never stared so much at either hearing or reading any story in his life. He said he was sorry for his brother Frederick, in like manner as he should be to see a malefactor hung in chains, without a moment to beg pardon, if he had any mind to be sorry for his crimes; but added, he had but justice.

But how came Harry Lamsbroke at Oxford? We confess that we are in debt to you, reader, on this head, owe an explanation, which we now proceed to pay: and, to settle our account like men of business, we will refer you to book, reader, to see of what standing such our account is, and it appears that nothing has been done in regard to this matter since the two lovers ran away in the night from Oaken Grove.—Very good—now Genevieve, as we observed a few pages ago, was running to Merton college to find her husband when she met Harry on her way, who, coming upon her at a sudden turn, made her jump, as we say,—“start” had been the phrase if she had been a horse.—“Good heavens, Mr. Lamsbroke,” said she, “what do you do here?”

“I am come to take my Master's degree,” said Harry, “and my name off the books,” staring at her as if he saw a ghost!

“Where's Charlotte?” said Genevieve.

“She is here in the university, where she will be until I have done my business here, when we go to Florence, where I hear my father now resides.”

“You are married, then?” said Genevieve.

“We are,” said he; “that event took place a few hours after we left the castle.”

"I will never forgive Charlotte," said Genevieve; and would have run on, but Harry's curiosity broke in upon her, for he could hold no longer.

"In the name of all the wonders in the world," said Harry, raising his voice above her's, "whence come you, Miss De Roma?"

"I don't wonder at your calling me by a wrong name," said she, "but I can't stay to satisfy you now; I am going as fast as I can to find my dear husband, who, if he loves me as much as I love him, must be miserable indeed."

"Come with me this moment," said Harry, and cried as he spoke, for poor Harry was very tender-hearted—"Come with me this moment, I have just left him, and can shew you where he is."

Away they went "full drive," as a great author emphatically saith; and, coming round a corner, Genevieve ran "plump," as another fine writer hath it, upon Old Comical, just as he was buying a pennyworth of apples of a barrow-woman. Now Old Comical could have stood his ground under a sack of wheat, if he had known when to expect it, but his muscles were all off their guard as he was leaning over the barrow to pick the best pippins for his penny—whereupon down came Genevieve, down came Old Comical, down came the wheel-barrow, and down came the apple-woman with her child sucking at her breast, and the apples rolled away as fast as they could for their hearts, to get clear of the aforesaid falling bodies, but many were squeezed to death, and the cider ran along the pavement! Up leaped Genevieve, and, bidding Old Comical pay all damages, Harry and she were out of sight and hearing too in a moment, before the apple-woman could bring

her tongue to bear upon the enemy. As soon as Harry had shewn Genevieve into the library, he went to Lady Charlotte, but, strange to say, do what he could, she was not to be persuaded to see Genevieve. She had prided herself so much upon her skill in deceiving others that she could not endure the sight of one who had been a witness to her disgrace. She left a very kind letter for her, however, and, getting into a post-chaise, went off to Woodstock, where she waited till Harry came to her; and he made the best of his time to get all his university matters settled according to his father's last orders, for they were so extremely fond of each other, that it was tearing of live flesh in pieces to part them.

To return to Genevieve: some have said that she was a fit warning to the ladies not to use any man ill who comes upon the foot of a lover: let her remain as such a warning with all our hearts. We will not say, and we have her, even herself, on our side in this, we will not say that she was without her faults; she had exasperated some very fiery spirits, and her escape was not a little marvellous. We think, however, that she has been hardly used by others who have attributed her severe usage of her lovers to a scandalous aversion to our sex. Such certainly exist who had much rather find a devil than any one good quality in a woman; and what would heaven itself be to such as these, but a place of torment, if they could not find a fault in it? Where could they be sent to be damned but to a place of perfection? But who, after all, Acerbus excepted and poor Smith, ever applied for her favours but a gang of town fops who had nothing else to generalize them with mankind but their form and their vices? In regard to any unnatural apathy, we think Genevieve has

pretty sufficiently kissed away that objection when she threw herself into her husband's arms with all the passion of an Eloïsa;—and we have been a little more minute in our description of this interview, than some perhaps may approve, upon that account. But of this thus far.

Harry Lamsbroke, who had two curiosities to satisfy, his own and Lady Charlotte's, readily accepted Genevieve's invitation to dine with her and Acerbus; and, it growing late before Genevieve had told her story, he, as soon as she had told it, and answered all questions, arose, and wished them a good night.—Yes, the time had outrun Genevieve's and her husband's thoughts, for it was twelve o'clock, and time to go to bed. Old nurse now knocked at the door, and came to light Genevieve to her chamber, and was it any wonder that Acerbus had no mind to sleep in college that night? It would not have looked pretty for husband and wife to have separate beds—it would have been very indecent, indeed! When she arose to leave him Acerbus took her hand, she knew what he meant, turned away her face, bit her lips, and at last burst into tears. Old nurse did not stay long to watch the waters, but set down the candlestick which she brought in with her, and thought it as good to leave husband and wife to settle their matters by themselves.

“O my love, my love,” said Acerbus, “do not stain this happy moment with a tear,”—which we think was a very pretty speech for a philosopher—but see how love and wine alter a man!—not that Acerbus was tipsy, for he very rarely drank any thing but weak wine and water. Acerbus wanted no aid of wine to raise his spirits.

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"My dearest dear husband," said Genevieve, looking fondly in his face, with her eyes glittering through her tears, "do not follow me now."

"O my dearest Jenny," said he, "are you not mine? mine by the most sacred tie? consider what sad delay—do not check me now!—I think I shall die if I do not follow you."

"I would not kill my dear Acerbus," said Genevieve with a pretty smile, "no, not even with kindness if I should lose him by it, though I could find in my heart to kill him with kindness too, if I could bring him to life again as often as I killed him."

This speech put the philosopher a little off his guard, and well it might if ten philosophers had been bound up together, but Genevieve put her hand upon his bosom and pushing him gently from her own, looked at him with a very serious face and said, "My dearest dear love, let us at this fond moment remember to whom we owe our best thanks for this most happy meeting—let us first beg our good uncle Bartholomew to return those thanks for us in that sacred house wherein I received this dear hand," pressing Acerbus's hand between both her's, "and, after such our thanksgiving for the late mercies bestowed upon me, you shall come."

Genevieve tried to conceal a fine blush with her hand—but in vain—and she left the room in a moment. If any thing could add to Acerbus's love for Genevieve, this might have done it, but his fond bosom was so very full of love already, that it could hardly hold any more:—he fell on his knees, scarce knowing what he did, and begged a blessing on her.—After which, and it was well the waiter did not come in and find him upon his

knees, he returned to Merton, and slept that night in college. Now, reader, if thou hast a mind to taste the most ecstatic raptures of love in their highest relish, put religion and virtue into the dish, or set it down to the dogs.

Acerbus and Genevieve called the next morning to take their leave of the good old warden of Merton college. The old man gave them his blessing, and presented Acerbus with a very handsome piece of plate, which he had long kept by him for that purpose; it had this inscription on it: "*Palman qui meruit, ferat.*" "Give him the laurel who deserves the bough." *

Upon their return to the inn they found every thing got ready for their journey, so they shook hands with Harry Lamsbroke, and, binding their strongest injunctions on him to bring Lady Charlotte to Oaken Grove, they put old nurse between them, like a party-wall, that one might not set the other on fire, and away they went out of Oxford as fast as four horses could run with them.

* More literally, "Let him bear the palm who has deserved it." This was the motto of Lord Nelson and of the Royal Naval School of Great Britain. The author of the saying was Jortin, in his "*Lusus Poetici*," poem "*ad Ventos*," stanza 4.—*Editor's Note.*

CHAPTER XVI

Some Account of Mr. Decastro and Old Crab—The Difficulty they had to find Frederick's place of Residence—What happened in it when they found it.

A MAN who has two sons, the one a very bad one, and the other a very good one, had best be content to go snacks with the devil, keep the best for himself, and let the devil take the other. Children, not to pick them, but take them rough as they run, three parts out of four will go to the devil to choose with as much pleasure as they will to hot cockles. Do what you will, or say what you please, there is no such thing as turning the heads of some of them. This was the case with Mr. Decastro's eldest son Frederick, he came into the world ready saddled and bridled for old Satan, who leaped upon his back and cantered him into hell without drawing bit. The great road to this place seems to be so much beaten that it is no easy matter to tell whether the most people go there on horseback, in carriages, or on foot, but it seems people had rather walk than not go at all, for some reason or other: The devil, himself, however, came to fetch Frederick for fear he should miss the road, and that is the reason, perhaps, that he never went one step out of his way, and carried the devil so quietly as never to make one kick-up to throw his rider. He never wanted for rebuke, or advice, the former from Old Crab, the latter from his father and mother, as long as they knew where to find him, after

which we suppose they may be excused both from advice and rebuke, when they no longer knew where to look for him. Old Crab and Mr. Decastro spared for no pains to find him now: they had been directed by Genevieve to search for him in the neighbourhood of a place called Park-gate, but without success, and they fished for him in vain on the banks of the river Dee; the name of Decastro was not known in these parts, and they began to think that they were hunting for a thing which they must look somewhere else for.

“Brother John,” quoth Old Crab, “’tis of no use to ask for Frederick Decastro here, the devil has given him another title: and he will not be the first scoundrel that was born in one name and hanged in another: we must change our plans.”

Upon which they returned to a little village round which they had been making of circles all day, and coming into their inn which they had made their head quarters, Old Crab called for the barber, and while he was getting his tackle ready for Old Crab’s chin—“What news, Master Barber?” quoth Old Crab, “any throats cut of late in your parts?”

This question opened the barber’s mouth like an emetic, and out came an abundance of anecdote, intelligence, history, information, instruction and discovery, during the time that the razor passed over Old Crab’s silent face. All on a sudden the barber took Old Crab’s nose betwixt his finger and his thumb, and spake as follows: “These are all the newest matters stirring in our parts of late date,” said the barber, referring to some tittle-tattle that had gone before—“Mr. Fleming’s being stabbed by the mad woman is old news, that I suppose you have heard, sir?”

“Not I,” said Old Crab, “tell the story.”

“You must know, sir,” said the barber, settling his face with much complacency for his narrative, “a young gentleman named Fleming came into our parts some time since, and took the house in the grove, belonging to a rich smuggler, close by the river side: a very good sort of a gentleman, I shaved him once, had travelled a great deal, he bought a box of razors of me;—well, this gentleman, though he kicked me out of his house for asking a question, was a very good gentleman, all’s one for that, for he took compassion upon a very poor relation who was not in her right mind, fed her, lodged her, clothed her, found her doctors, medicine and attendants, and poured out a world of charity upon her, saved her poor parents all harmless scot and lot—kept her full and wholly—bed, board, washing, lodging, all for nothing.—Well, one night, it might be three weeks ago, he was going to her room to see that all was right, that she had all she wanted, and to ask her how she did, a violent raging fit of madness came on, when she snatched up a knife which was left within her reach and stabbed the poor young gentleman in his side, and he fell, as it was thought, dead at her foot. Well, as soon as she had done the horrid deed, she broke out of the house and ran away in the night, and has not since been heard of. Poor Mr. Fleming was carried to his bed in a dreadful state, and now lingers as it were between life and death, without the least hope of recovery. A kick is no great matter where a gentleman is so very charitable, I forgive him with all my heart, and wish he was well enough to kick me again, for the matter of that—he bore an excellent character, gave an alms when every body was looking on to set a good example,

and was seen at church every Sunday. I served him with soap and shaving boxes, strops and razors—the devil take the mad woman, I say, I doubt I have lost one of my best customers.”

This story took Old Crab by the ear, but he made no observations on it at present. “What are your charges?” quoth Old Crab to the barber.

“Only six-pence, sir,” said he, “you may go farther and get worse shaved for more money.”

“Where does this Fleming live, barber?” quoth Old Crab.

“If you mean how far off, sir,” said the barber, “it is about four miles; and if you want to know the way to his house, you must go to the left, here, down the village, till you come to my pole, then turn short off at my shop, and keep the straight road till you come to the church, then turn again to the left, get over the stile, and the foot path will take you the shortest way to his house.”

At that moment Mr. Decastro came into the room, who had gone to order dinner, while the operation was performing on Old Crab’s visage. “Brother John,” said he, “this chattering rascal has told me an odd story of one Fleming, that lives within a few miles of this town, who has been stabbed, lately, by some mad woman, and now lies dead, or dying, of his wound: it looks a little like our business, we will go to the house to-morrow, and see if we can make any thing of it.” The next day, taking the barber’s directions, they walked to the house, it stood by the side of a little grove, and a road ran by the walls of it. At the entrance was a little yard enclosed by a low wall, which was constructed of some white stone, and in one part of it it was stained with blood.

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"Look," said Old Crab, pointing at the stain with his stick, "here is blood on the wall."

"I believe this to be the house, brother," said Mr. Decastro, "see, here is the little yard, and here the low wall, and here the road running at the foot of it, just as Jenny described these things." Presently a large black man, at least as black as a great black beard could make a man, came and asked them what business they had there, and what they stood looking at the wall for?

"What's that to you?" said Old Crab; "a man may stand on the King's highway and look at a wall, I warrant; who bade you bark at us? how came this mark of a bloody hand on your wall? we are strangers in these parts, and know less than your neighbours, perhaps."

"So it seems by your question," said the fellow; "we have had a bloody business here; a mad woman, who was confined in the house, broke loose and stabbed my master: she jumped over the wall, when she ran away, and left the print of her hand upon it."

"It is a large hand for a woman," said Old Crab, "what size was she?"

"Size," said the fellow, "why, bigger than most men; she was as tall as I am, and bigger."

"Of what complexion," said Old Crab, "dark or fair?"

"Black as the devil," said the fellow, "and as beautiful as an angel."

"She had such a gown and such a hat on?" said Old Crab, describing Genevieve's dress, "when she ran away?"

"She had," said the man; "how came you to know it?"

"That's neither here nor there," quoth Old Crab; "should you know her name if a man asked the question?"

"My master used to call her, 'Mad Bess,' I never heard any other name for her," said he.

"It is a lie," said Old Crab, "she was not mad."

"My master always said she was mad."

"Your master is a liar and a scoundrel," quoth Old Crab, "if he said so."

"These are hard words," said the fellow.

"Hard or soft, they are true words," quoth Old Crab; "this is the house, brother John: open the gates, fellow, we are come to have some talk with your master."

"My master can see nobody but the surgeons," said the fellow, "and will not see them long, for it is said he must die."

"We will see him for all that," said Old Crab, "so open the gates or I will kick them open." At that moment a carriage drove up with two surgeons in it. "Who are you?" said Old Crab.

"We are professional men," said one, "come to see what can be done for Mr. Fleming, who lies dangerously ill of a wound, in this house."

"Aye," said Old Crab, "and here stands Mr. Fleming his father, and here stands Mr. Fleming his uncle, come to see how he does."

"I humbly ask pardon," said the man with the black beard; "if I had known that before, I would not have kept you outside of the gate, gentlemen." Upon this, they were all shown into a room together.

"A word with you, doctor," quoth Old Crab, to one of the surgeons, while Mr. Decastro engaged the other, "how came your patient by his wound?"

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"He was stabbed by the mad lady, sir."

"*The* mad lady," quoth Old Crab, "you speak as if I knew any thing about a mad lady, what mad lady?"

"She was the daughter of some poor relation," said the doctor, "whom Mr. Fleming had taken under his care out of charity, an act of kindness which had gained him great esteem here in the neighbourhood."

"Are you sure she was mad, doctor?" quoth Old Crab.

"There never was a doubt about it," said he, "and if there had, this last act of her's were enough, of all conscience, to have removed twenty doubts"

"It is a lie," quoth Old Crab, "she was not mad."

"I don't take these words to myself, sir," said the doctor, "certainly."

"I don't care what you take," quoth Old Crab, "or what you do not take, doctor, but I say she was not mad."

"They were forced to keep her chained up in a vault," said the doctor, "which was no sign of her being much in her senses."

"Did she gnaw the chains on her body," said Old Crab, "or how did she get loose?"

"She had been very quiet for some time," said he, "and they ventured to let her loose."

"It is all a lie from one end to the other, doctor; she never had one chain on her body, nor was she mad."

"What better information you may have, sir," said the doctor, "I cannot divine; such was the report, and that was the universal belief, the thing was much talked of here, and for ten miles round, but no doubt ever entered one man's head, but that she was mad."

"She was not mad," said Old Crab; and reaching

his hand to the chimney-piece took Genevieve's gold repeater off a book, "Do you know that watch, brother John?"

Mr. Decastro took the watch, and said, "he knew it as well as he knew his own." It was not very astonishing that what had passed should excite the doctor's curiosity, or that he should stare at hearing all his neighbours so flatly contradicted. A servant coming into the room for a case of instruments which the other surgeon wanted, who had gone to the sick man, "Woman," said Old Crab, "whose watch is this?"

"It belonged to the mad lady, sir," said she, and, calling the surgeon out of his brown study, told him that he was wanted. Old Crab would have followed him, but he said he had best go and prepare the patient before they came to see him, and left the room. While the two surgeons were engaged with their patient, Mr. Decastro and Old Crab asked to be shown the mad woman's apartments, upon which the black fellow, whom they met at the gate, came to them with a large key in one hand and a candle and lanthorn in the other. They followed him into the yard which they had first entered, and he led them up to a solid brick wall. Putting his hand upon one of the bricks he pushed it in, and then thrusting his hand through the wall, unbolted a bolt, when a square piece of wall opened upon two large hinges, to the no small surprise of Old Crab and Mr. Decastro.

The fellow entered with his lanthorn and bade them follow him. Mr. Decastro, looking down into a very dark passage, seemed to be of opinion that Old Crab might as well go by himself, but he took his brother by the arm, and said, "Come along, John, what art afraid

of?" so in they went after the fellow, who, when he had led them half way down the passage, took his candle out of the lanthorn and holding it close to the ground showed them a great quantity of blood upon it, and said, "Here the deed was done." He then led them down to a large heavy door which had two great chains on it that crossed each other at right angles, when, pressing down a spring bolt, they fell down on the floor both together with a terrible noise—a noise well known to Genevieve. Old Crab and Mr. Decastro were then shown an inner door, which the fellow unlocked, and introduced them into the two apartments occupied by poor Genevieve: they were found in the same disfurnished state in which she left them, and there stood her wooden bench on which she used to sit to eat her bread and drink her water, with a bit of an old crust still lying upon it, and a brown earthen bowl standing close by, the remains of her last meal in this dreadful place! Old Crab stood his ground without any visible emotion, but Mr. Decastro trembled, and could scarce support himself, though he rested on Old Crab's arm.

Mr. Decastro kicked his foot upon something which lay under the bench, when, upon lowering the lanthorn, it was found to be Genevieve's Bible and prayer-book.

The fellow then took them to the other apartment. Coming to the door of it, he again took his candle out of the lanthorn, and, holding it close to the floor, showed it to be all stained with blood, some of which still stood in little puddles.

"How came this blood here?" said Old Crab, in a thundering voice that made the place echo.

"The mad woman stabbed two of her keepers here,"

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said the fellow, "and wounded me in the shoulder who came running to their assistance."

"Was all this bloody work done on the night of her escape?" said Mr. Decastro.

"It was," said the fellow.

They then took a survey of Genevieve's bed-chamber, and the bed still retained the print of her body where she last lay. Old Crab, looking into the corner of the room, found the horrible engine, or cross, on which Genevieve was to have been buckled down. "What's here?" quoth he.

"It is the frame," said the fellow, "on which the mad woman was strapped down when she was in her raging fits."

Old Crab's fierce eyes flashed fire at the sight of it, and Mr. Decastro felt just as if a cold eel had crawled down his back. Returning to the bed-room door, Old Crab looked for the great chest which Genevieve had balanced upon a shelf to come down upon the heads of any that entered there, he found it in a corner, and, taking the candle out of the fellow's lanthorn, he examined the outside of it, and saw one of its edges stained with blood, and some hair sticking on it, which convinced him, and Mr. Decastro, who also examined it, that the chest had pretty well answered Genevieve's purpose.

"What box is this?" said Old Crab.

"It is one of the merchant's chests," said the fellow; "these were store-rooms once, where the merchant, whose house it is, used to keep his goods: look, sir, there is one of the shelves now above the door; my master removed all the rest when he furnished the rooms for the mad lady: the furniture was taken out

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after she made her escape, except what you see in the bed-chamber."

"This box is very heavy," said Old Crab, "let us see what it contains."

Upon which he turned the chest with some difficulty on its bottom, and wrenching it open, found it to be filled with old iron. The man said he did not know what it contained, for he had never examined it. They now left these dismal apartments to their native darkness and horrors, and, coming to the door, Old Crab locked it himself and put the key into his pocket. The fellow made a little objection to this; he resigned the key, however, upon being told by Old Crab that in case his master died they were come to be executors. The walled door at the mouth of the passage was an ingenious contrivance, it was a strong frame of wood inside, with panels and bolts, and looked like any common door; but on the outside a ledge had been fixed to the bottom of it of a brick's width, and on this the courses of bricks had been laid, so that when the door was closed a man would take it for one solid wall. One brick lay loose; this brick, when drawn out, gave room for a man's hand to come in and unlock the door: this loose brick fitted its place so well, that no man could find, by looking at the wall, what brick lay loose in it and what not. Old Crab and Mr. Decastro now returned to the room which they had left, and found the surgeons returned to it. Old Crab asked one of them if they might go up and see the sick man? The doctor said it were no great matter who saw him, for it was impossible he could live another hour, and if they would see him alive they had best make haste. Upon which Old Crab and one of the surgeons went up stairs. Mr.

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Decastro was too much affected to do it. He staid below with the other surgeon. Coming into the room, Old Crab walked round to that side of the bed where the curtains were opened to give the patient air.

The moment Frederick saw him he said, in a weak voice, "It is my uncle!" and fainted away. Coming to his senses again after some time by the surgeon's help, Old Crab asked him if he had a mind to see his father? He was now speechless, but held up his hand as if for a sign to see him. The nurse was sent to bring Mr. Decastro, who could hardly get resolution to come into the room, when Old Crab went to the door, and, taking him by the arm, brought him, almost by force, to his son's bedside. Mr. Decastro looked at his son and wept. Frederick fixed his eyes upon his father, and made an attempt to speak, but could not: his face looked convulsed as if he would have wept if he had strength; some tears ran off his cheek upon his pillow: he put forth his hand to his father, as if to be forgiven, when Old Crab put Mr. Decastro's hand into his son's hand, who gave it a gentle squeeze and died. Poor Mr. Decastro was so overcome by this sad scene that he fell into an agony of grief, and the surgeon, who was present, forced him out of the room.

Old Crab was left with the nurse and the corpse, and began to question the woman, First, if she knew of any will? She said she was sure there was none if the word of the deceased were to be taken, for, upon being advised with by one of the surgeons upon it, he said he thought he should recover, but if he did not, the devil might be his heir-at-law, for any thing he cared; he would make no will, not he.—Secondly, if she knew where Frederick kept his keys? The woman said they

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might be found under his pillow, where he always kept them. Old Crab searched and found them where the woman said. Thirdly, if she was in the house when her master was stabbed? She said she was not, nor any, except John Colbourne, (the fellow whom they met at the gates,) the rest all ran out of the house when they heard that murder had been committed in it, for fear of getting hanged. Fourthly, could she tell where any of them could be found? She said she could do no such thing, for they were all of them strangers to her. Fifthly, if she knew any thing of the woman who stabbed her master? She said she knew nothing of her, for she had run away before she entered the house, all she had heard of her was that she was out of her mind, and that her master kept her at his own expense, as her friends were very poor and overstocked with children. She had heard that she was her master's cousin, and her master was very well spoken of in the neighbourhood for his kindness and charity to her. Sixthly, if she knew what others she had stabbed besides her master? The woman said that she had heard two of her keepers had been stabbed by her, but how true that might be she could not tell; she had often asked John Colbourne about it, but he was such a close fellow nobody could get any thing out of him. Old Crab then asked her if there had ever been any suspicion got abroad of any lie or collusion in this affair? She said she had never heard of any the least suspicion of that kind: that her master had lived two years in that house, and always bore the best of characters, and did his duty to God and man. If she knew any thing of John Colbourne? She said that he was the only one of all the old servants that was left; a great favourite

with his master, one that looked more like a confidant than a servant; one in great trust too in regard to money matters. Her master and John Colbourne often talked together. She had been sometimes sent out of the room when John Colbourne and his master talked together; had listened once, but could make nothing of their talk, for Colbourne and his master did not speak in English. If she belonged to that parish, or had lived much in it of late? She had never lived out of it; had heard it said by several that the mad lady had grown worse, and had stabbed two others as well as Mr. Fleming; could not tell how true it might be; if killed or not she could not say, but none had ever been buried. She came into the house the day after her master had been wounded, and if there had been any inquest, or any funerals, she must have heard something about the matter. There never had come any funeral from that house since the death of Blazing Jack the smuggler, as he was called whose place it was, now come to his son, for she lived close to the church, and ought to know if any died, for her father was clerk to the parish.

Old Crab had now put seals upon all the locks in the room, and proceeded to do the like in others, when John Colbourne came up to take leave of his master, which he did by shaking hands with the corpse. Old Crab gave the fellow a stern look, and asked him, in a loud voice, what demands he had upon his late master's property? He said his master owed him three hundred pounds.

"Bring in your account to me," said Old Crab, "and if the demand be a just one I will take care to see it paid you."

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The man thanked Old Crab twice over and left the room. Old Crab now went down stairs, and the nurse followed him, for there was like to be no more nursing, and found Mr. Decastro sitting with the doctors, who were doing all they could to comfort him. It was deemed advisable that he should quit the house as soon as possible, and the surgeons took him with them, and, as it lay in their way, set him down at his inn. Old Crab now gave orders as executor, and there was none to control him. Upon calling for the bills, he was not a little astonished to find that Frederick did not owe any body one farthing except the servants, and the surgeons for their last visit. He was an excellent paymaster, the servants said, for he paid ready money for everything as it came into the house. The poor would lose in him a good friend, it was added, for there were no less than four poor families entirely kept at his expense! Four times in the year he had made it a rule to receive the sacrament, and, in addition to other charities, always put five-and-twenty guineas into the plate: but the greatest charity of all, and what he had stood in the highest repute for, was, the care and kindness he showed to the poor mad woman and her relations, and that at great expense. Frederick, by these means, had made his name too powerful to be struck down by any casual blow. If any thing was said against a man that had got such a reputation in the neighbourhood it was scouted at once, and he who said it lost his character. The house had been taken ready-furnished, for which money had been paid in advance, and when Frederick was known to be dead the owner waited upon Old Crab, and very honestly returned him a balance of thirty pounds.

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As soon as the death was announced there was a general lamentation throughout the neighbourhood. Old Crab did not stand out much against Mr. Decastro's earnest entreaties to have the remains of his son put into the family vault at Oaken Grove, so orders were given accordingly, and all matters executed in a manner suitable to the dignity of the family. As soon as the coffin was put into the hearse, a large body of poor people formed themselves into a funeral procession, and followed the corpse to the boundaries of the parish with weeping and lamentations! A good name is certainly a valuable thing, and so Frederick as certainly thought; for he spared no pains, it seems, or expense, to get one; but, although he bought it, it was not his own, and he might truly be said to die in a mask. He had lived in a private manner, was visited by, and visited, very few: none, indeed, but those whose houses might be seen from the tower of the parish church. He had often friends on a visit with him, whom he never introduced in the neighbourhood. He was never seen to drink any wine, play at cards, or heard to swear an oath. He read a sermon and family prayers in his house twice a week, and if any one happened to be a little more moral or religious than ordinary, folks used to say he would grow to be a second Mr. Fleming. Old Crab thought it was a great pity people should be deceived in this way, and had it in his head to unmask Mr. Fleming; but Mr. Decastro said that he did not see any great harm might come from leaving his good name undisturbed, now he was gone to rest. Not that this weighed with Old Crab, or any thing Mr. Decastro could say, in the present or any other matter, if he thought any good might come from

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opposing him: but Frederick's reputation as a moral and religious man had struck such very deep roots in the minds of the people in this neighbourhood, that Old Crab thought he might even do more harm than good, by exposing such an impostor. It might bring disgrace, in some minds, upon the thing he pretended to be, and more especially in those of the inferior classes, that had best not be put in a way to confound things. He let John Colbourne have his wish, who very earnestly begged to attend his master to his grave, holding him by this tie only, that he should be paid what was due to him after the funeral was over. We very well know that Old Crab has been blamed in giving Colbourne such an opportunity to make his escape, but it will be found that very little could have been done with him if he had chosen to hold his tongue. He had let fall a thing certainly that, had the crime been committed, might have gone so far as to have brought him in an abettor, and that before two witnesses; but, as it had not, very little could be made of it. But more has been said against Old Crab, for not unmasking Frederick, and there may be some room for it, notwithstanding Mr. Decastro's tenderness for the credit of his family.

"Brother John," said Old Crab, "I have changed my mind; I am willing to let the scoundrel do what good he can, none here know the rascal's principles, so let his good example have its weight. If we explain matters, some men may be afraid to set good examples here, lest they be suspected to have some ill design to cover, by striving to be better than their neighbours. If we expose him we shall give furtherance to the malice of the devil: for, when villains do good that ill

may come, the very doing of good gets into disrepute by being made an instrument of evil. I shall hold my tongue, John." This was the sum of Old Crab's argument upon this matter, and we must own, though we once thought otherwise, that we now think Old Crab was in the right.

Frederick's goods and chattels were now put into waggons by Old Crab, and packed off to Oaken Grove; and, all matters being settled, he and Mr. Decastro put themselves upon their way home. Upon their arrival Frederick's funeral immediately took place, and Old Crab read the burial service over his body.

CHAPTER XVII

Genevieve and Acerbus arrive at the Castle—John Colbourne's Narrative.

THE day after the funeral Genevieve and Acerbus arrived at the castle, and the day after that, being Sunday, Old Crab returned thanks in church, in Genevieve's name, for the late mercies vouchsafed her in her escape from Frederick and his gang. He was so well pleased with her modest forbearance and piety, in this matter, that he shook hands with her on coming out of church, and called her a good wench; whereupon she took Acerbus with her in her carriage to her little cottage on the banks of the lake; and the philosopher, to give him his due, took good care this time that she should not get straggling about by herself again, for he would not trust her out of his sight, though Frederick was dead and buried. It is amazing how a pretty woman gets snapped up sometimes. Now we had written two or three pages full of all the pretty things that happened between Genevieve and Acerbus, before she wished the philosopher a good night; but we have scratched them out again, for which we think all our young readers will scarce be brought to forgive us, who, if they cannot kiss themselves, are well enough pleased to stand by and see others a-kissing. But what should we have done with grave folks, who hate a kiss worse than ratsbane, and no wonder, when they read in

their Bibles* that the first command given to Adam and Eve in Paradise, was, "Increase and multiply, and replenish the earth," which is worse than kissing ten times told; or, that "A man should cleave unto his wife, and they twain shall become one flesh," which is bringing them as near as well can be together! What is a kiss to all that? see what comes of reading indecent books!—It is a wonder folks in high authority will suffer such books to come into church!—Old Nurse came into the room with a little wax taper in a silver candlestick—Genevieve leaped off her husband's knee where she now thought it no sin to sit.

"Madam," said the old woman, "the great castle clock has just struck twelve."

Genevieve blushed:—wiped a tear off her cheek, and retired with her old nurse. We have blotted out a great many more pretty things in this place: How nice the world is! What a fine taste it has! It must have a new Bible made for it soon; folks are grown too modest to hear the old one read, and that is the reason they do not come to church. Well, saints may do what it were a sin to talk of—more shame for them, and yet be very good men and women.—What a sensitive plant is a modern ear! How it shrinks at the least touch! How tender it is if compared with a modern conscience! Aye, there's a tough piece of stuff for you! Old Ajax's shield, seven bulls' hides sewn together with leathern thongs and a packing needle, was the skin of a chicken to it! Acerbus soon followed Genevieve to her room—

(N. B. The solid Gentleman laid violent hands on the

* The author can scarcely be misunderstood in this place; lest he should, we beg to note, that these passages are an ironical cast on false modesty.

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pen at this time, or Old Comical, at the next step, would have been in the bride's chamber.)

Genevieve had married a philosopher, not because he was a handsome man, but because he was a good one. Her wish was not likely to be disappointed, to keep him what he was; and, in order to it, she would often put a book in his way, a thing which she knew would always please him, and then sit and look at him just as she used to do in the library when she was a maid. The worst of matrimony is, it is apt to change people out of the thing they would be thought to be, into the thing they are; it brings the old man and the old woman back again. During courtship, folks are vastly given to turn themselves out of doors, and put others, very unlike themselves, in their places to serve the time, as men to catch wild fowl will turn themselves into horses until they can get within shot—then comes the old fire and brimstone! Thus it is with matrimony: before it all is sweetness, harmony, and peace:—Lord! what a harmless gentle creature is a courting thing, and the thing courted!—What smiles, what endearments, what kisses!—A seraph he, and she a cherub!—One moment—let the parson but read the service, make this seraph and this cherub man and wife, and behold the change—no longer cherub, no longer seraph now, the angel's feathers are all moulted!

Let us see how Genevieve managed this matter. She loved Acerbus for what he was, and not for what he was not, though no man put himself less out of himself than he, even when he was courting his mistress, yet there must needs be a difference, the lover must pass and the husband remain. She felt a world of fondness for him, but checked it, not that she meant

that he should not have it all, but to economize it to make it last. Some women, as soon as they can fairly get at a man, will kiss him till they choke him.—(*N. B. The Solid Gentleman held up his finger at Old Comical in this place.*)—Well, well—all this is downright madness.—Genevieve kissed her husband, it is true, (*the Solid Gentleman taketh the quill,*) but she never kissed him without making a kiss a kindness, and it is no mean science in a wife to know how to manage this matter. A wife's kisses are very precious things, and ought never to be wasted. Genevieve set an example of moderation and temperance in this great matter, and would often refuse a kiss when she wanted one, that she might never want it and not get it. And the philosopher was not behind hand with her in this matter; he saw how much good sense there was in it, for, it is very true, that the most temperate people always eat with the best appetite, and can feed with a relish on a broiled bone, when the sated epicure can scarcely pick a bit out of a ragout. Behold, what a ragout is amongst meats, Genevieve was amongst women. Now, if a man brings a good stomach to plain food, what must he feel when he sits down to a savoury dish?—Genevieve was more coy to her husband than many a woman is to her lover, and by never granting a favour, without a little struggle for it, not only enjoyed the more what she seemed to refuse, but gave, by seeming to refuse, more pleasure to her husband at the same time. These, and the like little arts, kept love always alive between them. Genevieve was very nice in her person, to which nicety she paid, if possible, more attention after she was married than she did before: no compliment is better taken by a husband than this; none by a wife. The violence

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of Genevieve's temper taken into the account, some will say she chose well in choosing a philosopher. *Nota bene*, Nothing she feared so much as to be thought in the least to govern him. It was a thing, she used to say, so much beneath the dignity of a woman, that she made more sacrifices than need were, and far more than Acerbus expected or wanted, through dread of being accounted a termagant fool. Acerbus's good sense was what she fell so much in love with, for she was sure that he would never ask what she might not grant with credit to herself, or quarrel with her for doing any thing which would be a credit to him; which are often the grounds of many a vulgar matrimonial disturbance. Many men are never more angry with their wives than when they are doing the very thing which makes the most for the husband's advantage and reputation, not because they think their wives in the wrong, but because they see them to be doing the thing that is right without being able to get all the credit of it to themselves. Genevieve used to say, let a woman marry an ox if she pleases, but never marry an ass. If a woman marries a fool she gets no credit for doing her duty, for by doing as he bids her, she publishes his folly as well as her own; and what could be a greater folly than to choose a fool for her master? A sensible man is more easily governed after all, even if that is her object, for none but a wise man will own he is at any time in the wrong, and give up a point. A sensible man is the soonest convinced, and the least obstinate. The philosopher much oftener thought himself in the wrong than he really was, well aware at all times of human fallibility.

But to return to our history: The reader may well

conceive what a fire Sir John Lamsbroke's usage of Julia kindled in the combustible nature of Old Crab, but he very wisely soon got out of shot, and put an arm of the sea between him and Old Crab's fury. He immediately ran out of England, and left Old Crab in it to keep Great Britain warm, went to France first, and then into Italy, to show people what moral and religious folks we breed in our parts: and can a man travel for a better purpose than to instruct distant climes in their duty by their example?—no.—Adzooks, how Old Crab would have pinched him if he could have come at him in the mind he was!—He soon found, however, it was in vain to make a fuss about the matter, so he e'en laid by his sulphur and brimstone for another opportunity, or he could have been glad to have given the baronet a good singeing above ground, by way of foretaste of what he was to expect by-and-by.

Our history, reader, is now coming to a conclusion; our three heroines, you see, are married, and moreover as happy as heart can wish:—No, Lady Charlotte Orby, with her beloved Harry in her arms, has a sore place in her heart, a sore place which even Harry Lamsbroke, with all his kindness, cannot cure!—She is separated from Genevieve and from Julia, two friends whom she dearly loved, and whom she left, as well as others, with very little grace. She knew she was in the wrong, but seemed to think it would cost her more than she could well afford to get right again; but still, to her praise be it said, she felt very unhappy. Harry saw this, and knew the reason of it too, but was afraid to speak about it, for he was the meekest of all gentle things; came when he was called, did as he was bid, and made such a nice husband that Lady Charlotte got

ten times more fond of him after she had made him her own thing, for she made and did every thing herself, than she was before she could take the liberties of a wife with him. She saw what was the matter, and tried to check herself, for, having got into such a passion for him, her passion was her master if Harry was not, and that was as bad every bit; adzooks, she dare as well do any thing he did not like as eat her own fingers—see what comes of letting one's passions and appetites get the upper hand of one! A wife thereby loses the best privilege she has to her back, viz., that of ruling her husband.

One night she went to bed and put her head down upon the pillow, and that's the place where people usually put it that have any pillow, they that have not put it upon the bolster. Harry came presently, looked to see if she was in bed, crept round on her side, tucked her up and kissed her, for such were his orders—what a nice husband Harry was!—Don't get in love with him, my pretty reader, for if we kill Lady Charlotte with the next stroke of our pen, you may pull your heart out before you can pull Harry out of our book.—Well, after Harry had done as he was bid, he went to bed, and, supposing Lady Charlotte to be asleep, he made no more ado but put himself into the best sleeping posture he could think of. Presently he heard something between a sob and a deep sigh, when, catching Lady Charlotte in his arms, she dropt her face upon his bosom and wept. At this he was not a little surprised, for Lady Charlotte used to crack her jokes in bed, and be so full of her fun lawk-a-daisy-o, how funny she used to be! She would tickle Harry till he jumped out of bed, then she would dash out after him,

and there would be such a racing about the room—down went the chairs, tables, screens and chamber-horset; crockery was overturned, and water spilled!—(*N. B. A great deal blotted out in this place by the Solid Gentleman.*)—But this night she was very sad, and Harry asked her what was the matter? She was silent some time, for, being so used to keep things to herself, a secret came from her as if her tongue was tearing out of her mouth by the roots

“My dear Harry,” said she, “I am sorry for what I have done.”

“If done to me,” said he, “you are forgiven, my love, before you name your fault.”

“No,” said she, “not to you; you, and you alone, I never deceived; it grieves me to think how ill I have used my friends.”

Here she wept, poor soul! how the water ran out of her eyes upon Harry’s bosom!

“If we have done amiss,” said Harry, “and are sorry for it, who, that deserves our love, will not forgive us our faults? Beg Genevieve’s pardon and you set her soul on fire with love; beg Julia’s and you will fill her sweet eyes with tears, and her heart with the tenderest pity: even my uncle Bartholomew never refuses his pardon to any that ask for it.”

“O, my dear Harry,” said she, “but there is something so humiliating, such a sad pulling down, in owning one’s faults and asking to be pardoned!”

“No, no,” said Harry, but was afraid to contradict her without kissing her, “no, no,” said he, “they that do wrong and ask to be forgiven, instead of humbling, raise themselves to heaven!”

“Dearest Harry,” said she, “and so methinks they

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do, for we cannot get there without begging pardon—I will write to Genevieve and to Julia to-morrow; I love them, and I love Oaken Grove, and all that live in it; O how happy should I be to see it again, walk over our old walks with you, my dearest love, sit, talk and kiss, and call to mind old times.”

Well, so the next morning she did as she said, and ever after was a very good girl and told no more fibs, except in fun, which were untold as soon as told.—Reader, take the moral along with you, the only way to be happy is to be good. That merry seed Old Comical himself was thin, ragged, and miserable as long as he was a thief, but when he grew honest, he grew glad at heart, ran into bacon like a hog, and got as fat as a ball of grease.—

Now it came to pass as soon as Lady Charlotte's letter of repentance came to hand, as much forgiveness as her heart could wish came back by return of post, with an invitation to come to the castle, where her ladyship lay in of her first child, heaven bless it, and a nice boy it was!—Her kind reception by all her old friends at the castle, Hindermark and elsewhere, must be left to the reader's imagination.

Well, now, reader, turn thine eye, if thou hast but one, thine eyes, if two or more, to the castle once again, where we shall find a jolly party of our old friends toasting their noses at Mr. Decastro's great wooden fire as of old time, heaven rest them merry, and Old Comical cracking his jokes in the midst of them, lord of the manor of Cock-a-doodle now, and an esquire of vast substance, humble servant, moreover, and down at the delightful foot of Madam Funstall of Dilly's Piddle—yes, he pushed his suit, and charging

her on horseback, often rode and saw his love, Madam Frances Funstall, at Dilly's Piddle. Of this happy pair much yet remains to be said, so much that we must put it all into a volume by itself, together with Old Comical's journey into the west to pay his debts, and see his old friends, in a new gold-laced waistcoat, a chariot and four, and Madam Frances at his side.—But we must now bring John Colbourne on the stage, which we shall do in the following manner.

What is a flute? what is a grand piano? what is a French-horn? what is a whole band of music, if compared with the rich melodies of the dinner bell at the castle? How delicious was its harmony that put a man in mind of venison and claret? If Mr. Decastro had given a general invitation, and the bells had rung for church at the same time, who were like to have the largest congregation, he or the parson? Old Comical heard the sound, and licked his lips, for the lord of the manor of Cock-a-doodle was invited, as he always used to be when he worked on Old Crab's farm for a shilling a day and his victuals; not more for his oddities than out of respect for his family, and pity for his misfortunes. There were enough at that time to send Old Comical into the kitchen; but he had always a place at Mr. Decastro's table, where he played the jester upon the company, who always took his little pleasantries and taunts in good part.—Well, so the dinner bell rang and brought the following good folks to Mr. Decastro's hospitable and sumptuous table: Mr. and Mrs. Grove, George and Julia, Lady Charlotte and Harry Lamsbroke, Old Crab and his wife, Genevieve and her husband, and lastly Old Comical, as aforesaid; so down they all sat, and it must do your heart good, reader, to

see all the old party safe, sound, and merry in their old places, Mrs. Decastro and Lady Budemere excepted, who were gone to town to look for that which they could not find in the country, videlicet, the devil in a great smoke.—Now the worst of eating is that it takes away the appetite, and when it has done that folks never quarrel with the servants for taking away what they cannot eat. All this was now done, and the wines and desert set, and the servants sent out of the room.

“Brother John,” quoth Old Crab, “shall we order this fellow in and hear what he has got to say?”

Upon which Mr. Decastro rang the bell and gave orders for John Colbourne to be brought into the room. The butler immediately introduced John Colbourne, and left him in the room to shift for himself. The moment he entered it Genevieve almost started out of her chair! he was the man who waited upon her the last in her prison. The fellow started no less at the sight of Genevieve.

“So, sir,” said Genevieve, “we are met again—give me leave,” said she, “to introduce my worthy jailor, at whose kind hands I have so long received my bread and water.”

“John Colbourne, I think you said your name is?” quoth Old Crab. The man bowed in silence.

“I have a wondrous curiosity,” said Genevieve, “to hear the sound of this man’s voice; he waited upon me for more than two months in my dungeon, and I never could get one word from him in my life.”

The man seemed confounded at the sight of Genevieve whom he did not much expect to see. “You say, fellow,” quoth Old Crab, “that you have a demand of

three hundred pounds upon the estate of your late master?"

"I have," said the man, "and half a year's interest due upon the money at five per cent."

"You will swear to the debt?" quoth Old Crab.

"I will swear to any thing," said the man.

"Of what standing is the debt?" said Old Crab.

"Two years," said he; "I might have had my money at any time, but I knew it to be in safe hands; I was paid five per cent. for my money at two equal half year's payments, and was well content to let my principal lie: and should have been to have had a million of money in such hands. I have often known my master put his tradesmen right when they have made a blunder against themselves, and pay them more than their demands."

"Your master was a scoundrel," quoth Old Crab, "and that two people in this room can prove, and one that would not stick even to be honest and go to church to hide any villainy he had in hand: How long have you lived with this rascal?"

"More than two years," said the man; "he had his vices, if there are any such things as vices, but he used me well."

"Any such things as vices!" thundered Old Crab, "what the devil d'ye mean by that? you have not come into a good place for nothing if you have been taught to doubt it."

"I doubted it before I came into it," said the man.

"Then you could not have come into such a place with a better character for it," quoth Old Crab, "and might serve two masters without offending either, Frederick and the devil."

"I don't know whom you mean by Frederick," said

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the man, "my master's name was not Frederick but Thomas."

"Heighday!" quoth Old Crab, "I christened the scoundrel, I must know his name I suppose. If you don't believe me, there sits his father, ask him, you will allow a father to know his son's name, I warrant: but a word with you—you seem to be a fellow of notable principles to doubt if there be any such thing as vice in the world, who taught you this lesson? you must have had a very good education."

"I do not believe in any God," said the man, "and if there be no God there can be no vice, for vice is nothing if not an offence to some deity."

Old Crab's eyes flashed fire at these words, "Why," said he, "the devil himself believes and trembles, who are you?"

"That the devil may do," said the man, "but he never gave me his reasons for it."

"The devil is a better friend of yours," said Old Crab, "than to give you any such good advice—he might lose you by it, and that would be a pity after all the trouble your friends have taken in your breeding; was your master of your opinion?"

"He was," said the man; "but held religion to have its uses, if a man had any design to carry in a world, that the parsons had made a fool of, in order to pick its pocket."

"Good again," quoth Old Crab, "such a master could not have had a better servant, or such a servant a better master: Frederick held a very good name amongst his neighbours, no man ever had a better that deserved it worse; but he was not the first man that went to church to serve the devil: his religion was wind tight

and water tight in those parts, and it was his good luck to die before he wore his cloak out; and as masters leave their servants their cast clothes, it may serve your turn, honest friend, now he is gone to too hot a place to want either coats or cloaks, or there is more mercy in Heaven than makes for hell's advantage—it is no matter, but, pray, how came my niece, here, to be given out to be mad?"

"It was a lie told to deceive people, for it was intended that she should be ravished and murdered, and buried under the floor of her prison."

All were much shocked at this dreadful assertion, which the man uttered with as much composure as "Good morrow" to a friend.

"Rape and murder were held to be no crimes with Frederick I warrant?" quoth Old Crab.

"Why," said the man, "it depended on circumstances, if a friend stood in the way or the like: otherwise, if any passion or appetite were to be served, the crime was a mere bundle of straw."

"You scoundrel," quoth Old Crab, "how many had your master in his gang of this pious opinion?"

"There were six of us, my master and his three friends Dogger, Barret, and Moreton, myself and another servant."

"Yourself! that's well put in," quoth Old Crab, "and shows that you are not ashamed of your principles:—But what became of the rest?"

"Dogger and Moreton were killed by the iron chest falling on their heads," said the man, "which stood upon a shelf over that lady's bed-room door, the same which lay amidst the blood on the floor: Barret, as soon as he saw my master lie stabbed in the passage, fled."

"What became of your fellow-servant?" said Old Crab.

"I cut his throat," said the man.

"Why, you scoundrel," quoth Old Crab, "will you tell us that you are a murderer to our heads?"

"Not so much for that," said the man, "though I have cut throats before, but this was in my own defence."

"He would have cut yours, ha?" said Old Crab.

"No, but he said, when he saw my master lie in his blood with a knife in his side, that he would go and tell the justice of the peace what a pretty nest of birds we were; when I found he had changed the colour of his liver I cut his throat to save my own."

Mr. Decastro arose and said he could not stay to hear such things, it was too shocking to be in the same room with such a fellow. Now it is astonishing how curiosity kept the ladies in their places, but they sat it out, though some of them trembled at hearing this man talk.

"Sit down, brother John," quoth Old Crab, "let us hear this rascal's story: Well, child of grace, and what did you do with the man when you had cut his throat?"

"Dug a hole under the pavement of that lady's bed-chamber floor, and buried him with Dogger and Moreton, who lay knocked on the head in the door way."

"They may thank me for that," said Genevieve, "for I tied the chest to the door's-top, and set it on a balance, on purpose."

"How came you to be so well prepared for us, madam?" said the man.

"One in the house was so good as to conceal that note (showing the piece of paper which she found in

the bread,) under the crust of a loaf," said Genevieve; "is it your writing?"

"No, madam," said the man, "he wrote it whose throat I cut, I know his hand."

"It was well for me," said Genevieve, "his throat was cut no sooner—but did none of ye hear the report of the pistol in the passage?"

"I heard it, madam, and Barret too, but we were so confounded by the fall of the iron chest, which struck me down, as well as the two first men that entered your bed-chamber, that we knew not what was come to us. Barret cried out that we were betrayed, and, groping his way to the outside door in the dark, locked us all in. I, for my part, took the corner of the chest which struck me down for a cut with some heavy sword, for I felt my blood streaming down my body, and expected to bleed to death. We waited some time, and finding all quiet, I asked Barret to open the door and get a light, but he said we were best in the dark and where we were, for he was sure the house was entered by the report of the pistol, and that we were ambuscadoed, and wished he had seen the devil before he had agreed to have any hand in the business. Upon which I told him that I had received a great cut from a sword in the shoulder, and would not stay to bleed to death. This terrified Barret, and he unlocked the door and ran out, when the first thing we saw was my master rolling and groaning in his blood in the passage, and a candle burning at its full length on the floor at a little distance from him. We readily concluded him to be shot, having heard the report of a pistol, but presently, upon turning him to raise his body, we saw the handle of a knife sticking in his waistcoat, and found him to

be stabbed, but how it came to pass we could not guess."

"I stabbed him," said Genevieve, "the moment he shot at me, for the pistol, which you heard, was fired at my head."

"I admire your courage, madam," said the man, "though I have cause enough to lament the effects of it, for I was in hopes to have shared in the prize of your person."

"Villain!" exclaimed Genevieve, "have you the audacity to tell me so now to my face, in the midst and in the very bosom of my friends?"

"Madam," said the man, "I am come to that pass to fear nothing, though a woman is rarely displeased at a man who tells her he has a desire for her. We made all the speed we could to get help for my master, and, finding myself less hurt than I had thought, I hastened to the next town for a surgeon, whom I found, luckily, in his bed. As soon as I returned, I ran down the passage to your apartments, madam, and found the cause of our confusion there, the great iron chest lying on the floor, and Moreton and Dogger dead by its side."

"And pray, sir, how long was it before you missed me?"

"Now, and not before, I looked into your bed, the curtains of which were closely drawn, and, not finding you in it, I concluded that you had taken advantage of our confusion to make your escape. I came to my master, and said you were gone, at which he expressed great vexation, and gave orders that you should be instantly pursued. I got the surgeon to put a plaster upon my shoulder, which had received no other injury than a cut with the corner of the iron chest, and, pro-

curing some men and horses, who were readily brought to our purpose by the great reward offered for your recovery, put myself at their head, and set out in pursuit of you."

"You told them the mad woman had broke loose from her keepers," said Genevive, "or what pretence did you hold out?"

"I had no occasion to deceive them, they were some of our old party who brought you from this place."

"You had your labour for your pains, as good luck would have it," said Genevieve, "though at one time we were all under the same roof: but pray, sir, what became of the dumb woman who waited on me first?"

"She was not dumb, madam," said the man.

"Not dumb?" said Genevieve, "why she opened her mouth and showed me that she had no tongue in it."

"It was a trick, madam," said he, "she had the string of her tongue cut when an infant, and could turn her tongue back into her throat; she could talk as well as I can. She was despatched for speaking to her master on your behalf, my master and she came to a quarrel upon it, and he knocked her brains out with a poker, madam."

"Good heavens!" said Genevieve, "into the hands of what a merciless gang had I fallen! Well, but there was another that waited on me, what became of him? were his brains knocked out too?"

"You had nearly done that for him yourself, madam; he came bleeding from your apartments one day, and said that you had knocked him down and fractured his skull, he would come no more into your rooms."

"He deserved what he got," said Genevieve, "but,

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pray, what struck you all dumb? Why was I not to be spoke to by any of ye?"

"It was my master's orders that none should speak to you, that when he came to speak it might have the greater effect, and add to the horror of your situation."

"By your manner of speaking," quoth Old Crab, "you were not bred a servant, though you have now got a livery on your back;—whence are you, and who? You are no Englishman by your tongue: give some account of yourself, and how and where you and Fredrick came to meet."

"I have no objection to tell my story," said the man, "if you have time and patience to hear it."

"Tell it," said Old Crab.

THE HISTORY OF JOHN COLBOURNE

I was born a gentleman. (Old Comical at these words brought him a chair and looked at Mr. Decastro, who bade the man sit down.) I am an Italian by birth, the son of a man of great opulence in Florence, whose name is Palestrozzi. I was bred to the church, and had great expectations in it, but I studied divinity until I became an atheist; I therefore told my father that I could not answer it to my honour to go into the church, as I believed it to be a house without a master. My father started from me with horror at this my declaration, when I told him his feelings did him credit, but were ill employed on the present occasion. Divines of great learning and abilities were brought to argue with me, and no pains were spared by my father to bring me to my senses, as they were pleased to express themselves. I told them they had best find their way to their own

first, and then they might come with a better grace to bring me to mine. I came to a quarrel with two of them, whom I took the liberty to kick out of my apartments, one after the other. My conduct soon brought my father to talk to me in a very serious manner, he told me, that my mother was breaking her heart on my account, and begged of me, in the most earnest way, to relinquish my obstinacy, as he was pleased to call it, and embrace my profession and its truths. I flew in a rage, and cursed the profession for a cheat, and the clergy for a knot of rogues and impostors, told my father he was an old dotard to his face, and that my mother might break her heart and be hanged, for anything I cared, for I would be made a rascal of by nobody, for that was the right name of a clergyman. My father answered me with great spirit, when I gave him as good as he brought, and he went away. A very grave ecclesiastic, a relation of mine, seventy years of age, came to me soon after my father left me, and, seating himself on a sofa near me, put his hand on my shoulder, and said,

“Young man, your friends and relations have all met upon your conduct, and have deputed me to come and try what can be done with you in regard to the profession which is now offered to your choice.”

I broke in upon him immediately with all the abuse I could heap upon the clergy, and called them every opprobrious name I could think of, and spared not for blasphemies, as he called them, upon religion itself. Upon which the old gentleman said, and with some truth, that abuse was not argument, that to call religion a cheat, and the clergy a set of impostors, without being able to prove either the one or the other, was to

bring abundance of disgrace upon myself indeed, but no injury to them, as long as I could not make the thing out to be true.

As for abuse, nothing became a gentleman less, or disgraced him more, and the rather when gentlemen too were the objects of it. In regard to religion and its truths, it was not like that I should have it in my power to bring it or its professors into contempt with the world that had stood their ground against far more powerful assaults, and came off with victory too; it was as good as to attack a promontory with a water squirt, that had stood from age to age unmoved by all the fury of a thundering sea. I think I shall never forget the old man's comparison, which nettled me to the quick. He added, that, in regard to my profession, I might do as I pleased, but that my family had come to one determination, which was, to own no relationship to an atheist. Hitherto my father had bred me well, allowed me a noble income, and put me upon a foot with the sons of the greatest men in Florence. I confessed this to be true, and expressed my gratitude for my noble breeding. The old man went on to say that I must now expect to fare worse, for that my father had declared, and bade him tell me as much, that I might look to myself for the future, unless I chose to obey his orders, and do as it became the son of so distinguished a father. Upon which I made no answer, but took the feeble old man in my arms, and, putting him gently down outside the door, locked it in his face.

The whole of my allowance was instantly withdrawn, and I was left with a few pieces only in my escritoir. I paid my addresses at that time to a young lady in Florence, of good fortune and noble family, for whom,

and for her money, I had a very great esteem. Her name was Maria Masovelli, whose love for me was much more disinterested than mine for her. I waited upon her one evening and was received in a very different manner from that to which I had been used. I was let in at a private door, and, instead of being conducted into the house, for my proposals had been approved of by the family, I was shown by an old woman into a little summer-house in the garden, where I found my Maria in tears. She shook hands with me in silence, if sobbing can be called silence, and when she had recovered her voice, she said, we must meet no more, and added, that I must not be surprised that an atheist should be forbidden the house of a clergyman, for such unluckily her father happened to be. Here I received a wound in a tender part, for I loved Maria with a very different kind of love from any which I ever since felt for any other woman. I now produced the best arguments I could find in my defence, but she put me down, I confess, much sooner than I expected, and in a manner which I as little expected as I was prepared for. Matters had gone so far between us that we had long since confessed our mutual attachment, which she now repeated on her part with many tears, and said, that she would consent, for I vehemently pressed her to do it, she would consent to leave her father's house and fly with me if I were not an atheist.

"On an atheist," she said, "a woman had no tie, no pledge whatever of any the least security, both the head and heart of such a man must be bad, and she was now come to a resolution to renounce me for ever if it cost her, as she thought it would do, her life."

Upon which she arose with more dignity than I

ever saw in any woman, until I had the honour to see you, madam (bowing to Genevieve), and would have left me, but I caught her in my arms and told her that I was determined not to part with her, and, drawing my sword, I held its point to my bosom, and said, that if she did not follow me that moment I would leave her a corpse upon the spot. Upon this she uttered a shriek and fainted away at my feet.

She had been engaged to some company that evening, was very richly dressed, and wore diamonds about her of very great value; I had an eye to them for some reasons which will soon appear. I took her in my arms and bore her to my carriage, which waited at the garden door, and, before she was well recovered, got her to a private house which I held under my orders in the neighbourhood. I now offered her marriage, which she refused with the greatest abhorrence, and did not scruple to tell me to my face, although she was wholly in my power, that she would die twenty deaths sooner than unite herself to an atheist. After two hours spent in vain promises, and entreaties equally vain, I came to threats, but, if anything, with worse success. Vexed at this, and inflamed by her beauty, which was not a little enhanced by her perturbation, I tied my neckcloth over her mouth, and committed a dreadful act of violence. The moment she could disengage herself from me she ran to my sword, which I had put upon a table, and plunged it with so much force into her bosom that it came quite through her body, and she fell dead upon the floor. The first thing I did was to rob her person of her diamonds and everything else of any value about it, and make the best of my way out of Florence, which I expected would soon be on fire with the news of this

night's exploits. I sold the diamonds and some valuable trinkets, which I found on the person of Maria, for a sum of money far exceeding my utmost expectations, and, putting on a disguise, passed myself for an English gentleman, and called myself John Colbourne.

My intention was to get into France; on my way I fell into a gang of thieves that lived by robberies and plunder. They matriculated me into their society, I resigned up all I was worth into the common treasury, and became one of the most desperate of the crew. They found me to be a fellow of courage, and a man of honour. In a little time by one or two very daring exploits I grew into very great repute amongst them, and added a great deal to their stock. One night I got a wound in making an attack on some gentlemen, and, though I succeeded in bringing off my booty, which was immense, I fell extremely ill with my wound, for I had received a brace of balls in my left shoulder, and, though put into the hands of a very skilful surgeon, I was like to die. As soon as the surgeon gave me over, the captain of our gang came to take his leave of me, and express his gratitude for the very great additions I had made to their treasury by my individual gallantry, and asked me, that no attention on his part should be wanted, if I would see a priest to prepare me for my end? I shook the captain by the hand and thanked him kindly, but said I had no need of a priest, for I was an atheist. "An atheist!" exclaimed he, "an atheist!" —I reaffirmed it. "If I had known that before," said he, "if you were known to be as brave a fellow as ever bore arms, we should have seen you damned before we had made you one of us;" saying which he left me to die. My fever, however, took a

The History of Mr. John Deastro

turn, and I got well again, and, though I had every attention paid me during my illness, the captain never once came to inquire after me. As soon as I was perfectly recovered, I received the following note from him which was signed by the hands of the whole crew:—

TO JOHN COLBOURNE

Sir:

We, the undersigned, are come to a resolution to expel you from our society, and we hereby give you notice that you are expelled accordingly: The sum which you paid into our common stock, on being enrolled on our books, shall be honourably refunded to you, and as much again be added to it as a reward for the signal services which you have done us at the hazard of your life. We are outlaws and banditti, it is true, and live at war with society, but we are not as yet come to such a pass as to tolerate an atheist in our crew. We have reasons for what we do, and live in hopes to be forgiven at last. We have all of us been ill-used by the society with which we are at war, and look upon ourselves to be the instruments of vengeance in the hand of heaven for its sins and its injustice, and conceive ourselves to have as good conscience as nation that wages war against nation, and plunder one another, calling their robberies by the fine names of prizes and reprisals. But what hold can we have upon an atheist? The oath which you swore upon your admittance into our troop is not worth one straw; for how can you regard what you swore? What can bind you who have no reward to look to, no penalties to fear? An atheist is a man without any courage; he is not brave, but mad. A man that is an atheist can have no conscience, and a man without a conscience can have no honour. We are all afraid of you to a man; you may swear fidelity to us and our little army to-day, and betray us all to-morrow! If you are not gone from amongst us

this night before the sun sets, we will fall upon you and murder you, and throw your body into the next ditch.

To this paper thirty names were subscribed, of which number our gang consisted without me. I soon found it high time to be gone, so I took what the captain so handsomely offered me, and an excellent horse which he was pleased to call his own present, and away I rode after being hissed out of their cavern, which, it seems, was the most ignominious mode of expulsion amongst them. I certainly was very rich in what I had received, but not content with that I contrived to rob the robbers of a large golden cup which always stood by the captain at dinner, as a badge of his magnificence and his courage, for it was a prize taken by his own hand, when he received a terrible wound which had like to have cost him his life.

I expected to be pursued, so made the best of my way all that night, bending my course north-wards, and, after visiting several towns, came to Milan. Having plenty of cash in my portmanteau, I set up for a gentleman, hired a servant, and some good apartments, and sat down in them to cut out my plans, and count my money. Having for that purpose locked my door, I shot out all I had out of four bags, upon a table, and found I had a sum equal to three thousand pounds in English currency. Let a man have what he will, his object usually is to put something more to it, which I did by selling my gold cup. I lived frugally upon my heap of barren metal, well aware that every bit I put into my mouth made it less. The noble allowance which my father made me in Florence brought me into habits of luxury which gave me some trouble, and I

wanted a great many things which others could be very well without.

I had not been many days in Milan before I met with an adventure which introduced me to a young man of great consideration in this place. I was taking my walk in the town before dinner, when, all on a sudden, I heard a horse coming at full speed behind me, bringing a lady on his back, and a bridle in his mouth, without being under the least control from either. The lady held up her hands and called aloud for help, and her cries had brought a pack of rabble after her that made matters worse, and, instead of stopping her horse, made him go the faster. Seeing what was the matter, and having some advantage of the horse, by being before him, I threw off my greatcoat, that I might have no impediment, and making a plunge at the head of the animal, I had the good fortune to get hold of his bridle. The horse, however, had no mind to be stopped, though I hung with all my weight at his head, but galloped on, at a furious rate, and took me along with him for a hundred paces. Such was the power of the creature, that, by tossing his head, rearing, and dashing, he several times took me quite off the ground. I stuck to him, however, notwithstanding I had got some severe blows on the legs, and the horse, after a little time, beginning to find that he had got more about him than he could very well run away with, slackened his pace, by degrees, until he was fain to stand still and get breath. I now quitted the bridle and took the lady in my arms, in order to pull her off the saddle, which I did by main force, for she was fastened to it, the horse at the moment giving a plunge and bursting a strap which held her in it. The shock

brought us both to the ground together. She, however, got no hurt, for she fell upon me; but my head, for I fell backwards, coming with great force upon the pavement, I received a blow which stunned me for some time.

When I came to my senses, I found myself placed on a sofa, in a magnificent apartment, and a surgeon standing by me with a lancet in his hand, making due preparations for bleeding me. During the operation, a gentleman, about fifty years of age, came into the room, and, telling me that he was the uncle of the lady, made me an abundance of fine speeches and thanks, closing all with saying, that I was an instrument in the hands of Providence to save his daughter's life. I told him that he was quite mistaken, that there was no such thing as Providence, and if there was any merit, it was all my own. He stared at me as if to look whether I were made all over like a man, and he could not have put on an air of greater astonishment, if he had found the tail of a fish under my coat. It was not a time, he said, to dispute any point with a man who had saved the life of his only child, and his own too, for he never could have survived her loss; but he was so much amazed at my assertions that he begged to know from what part of the world such a man could come, who denied the being of a Providence? I told him that I was an Englishman, and was come to make the tour of Italy. He was unwilling, by any manner of means, to offend me, he said, but he had always esteemed the English to be a very wise and sensible people. He left the room with an expression of horror in his countenance which it is quite impossible for me to describe.

The History of Dr. John Decastro

The surgeon had taken a basin of blood from me, which gave me great relief, and, having bathed the bruises on my legs, was preparing to leave the room, when I begged to know his fee. He gave me a look of indignation, and said he would not take any money from a man of my principles if he wanted a dinner, and left the room as if there was a contagion in it. Two servants presently came in and brought me some cold meats and several sorts of wines, regarding me with a cautious eye, and putting things towards me at arm's length. I began to think that I was in the house of some ecclesiastic, and I was not mistaken. The young lady, whose life I had probably saved, now came in, very elegantly dressed, and some grave person, who looked like her mother, with her. She excused her delay to thank me for what I had done for her, by saying that her uncle, who was a clergyman, kept her in a thanksgiving for the mercies which had been vouchsafed her, conceived, however, there needed but little apology if she had stayed to thank heaven first, before she came to thank me.

"Madam," said I, "I am sure your meaning must have been very good in what you have done; it is an injustice to me, however, to thank any but myself for what you are pleased to call mercies. If I had not seized your horse by the bridle, at the hazard of my life, he would have run on, for anything heaven had cared about the matter, until he had thrown you, and, perhaps, broken your neck. If you were under the protection of what you call heaven, why did not heaven step in before me and stop your horse?"

"Sir," said she, holding up her hand to interrupt me, for she shewed every mark of horror at what I was

saying, "I had as lief my horse had run on as be stopped by a man of such shocking principles as yours, and given an opportunity to bring in his interference to save my life, by way of proof that I was so totally abandoned by Providence."

"Madam," said I, "you had better leave Providence to fight its own battles, than injure its cause by a weak defence; if you take me to have been an instrument in the hands of what you call Providence, to save your life, I must beg leave to set you right in that particular, by assuring you that Providence never called out to me to run to your assistance, or had I any other call, whatever, except compassion for your danger, which would bring me again to risk as much to save any other lady's life."

The grave old woman who came with her said nothing, but raised her hands and her eyes several times while I was talking. The other changed the subject, inquired very kindly how I did, and hoped I had taken no serious hurt. She then made me a courtesy, and, begging I would take some of the refreshments which had been set before me, left the room. I drank a glass of wine, and soon after went away. On going out of the house, a young man of good appearance followed me at a little distance till I came to my lodgings, when I saw him take his pocket-book, as if to make a memorandum of the street, and retire.

The next day, being rainy, I kept close at home, and, pacing about my room, I fell into a train of thoughts which perplexed me not a little: I could not find any reason which at all satisfied me, why I should feel so much pleasure in doing a good thing, and pain at doing an evil one. If good and evil are indifferent,

said I, why should one cause one sort of sensation, and one another? The saving the life of this young lady, gives me exquisite pleasure every time I reflect upon it; but every time I think on my barbarous usage of poor Maria, I feel as if a viper bit my heart! I seem to have something like a court of justice in my inside, and a judge always sitting in it, who never fails to reward me with pleasure when I do a good thing, and punish me with pain when I do an evil one.

“How can this be?” said I; “am I not my own master? and cannot I feel as I please? What is it that makes me feel pain thus after having done anything whether I will or not? and then again feel pleasure, just as if I was under some control? As if dependent on some power for my pleasure, which deals it out when he pleases, and as much as he pleases; and does the like in giving me pain when he sees fit? I feel as if I was at school, whipt when I am naughty, and rewarded when I am good—and how can this be, when I am sure good and evil are indifferent? and conscience nothing in a man of sense?”

While I was in this current and flux of thought, one knocked at the door, and my servant came in and said a stranger wished to be admitted. I was in an agitation, and scarce knew what to give order for; who this stranger might be, and what he wanted, I could not guess. The things which I had done both in Florence and after I had left it, rushed into my mind like terrible apparitions; I might be followed, detected, surprised, taken prisoner. I had done enough to expect all this.—

“The gentleman stands in the rain,” said the servant.

"Well," said I—"stands in the rain—how many stand in the rain?"

"Only one, sir, a very young gentleman—I have often seen him—his name is Raphini."

"Show him in," said I.

The moment I saw him, I recollected him to be the young man who followed me the day before: I showed him to a sofa, and begged to know his business with me.

"My business," said he, "is of a very pleasing kind. I am come to thank you for saving the life of a young lady for whom I entertain a most passionate regard. I walked after you to your lodgings yesterday, but had only time to take a note of your place of residence, and am now come to have the honour of shaking hands with a man to whom I am like to owe all my future happiness."

Upon which he took one of my hands between both of his, and actually shed tears upon it; I never saw a man so much affected in my life. As soon as he grew a little composed, he talked very pleasantly upon a variety of subjects, and seemed to be a man of the superior rank of breeding and of intellect. He arose, and, after inviting me to dine with him, looked like one recollecting something.

"O, but," said he, "I have not told you the news. A large party of horsemen came to Milan yesterday, who had travelled from Florence in pursuit of a murderer, of whom they got intelligence in this place. The story which they tell is, that the son of a man of high rank in that city, named Palestrozzi, had first become an atheist, and after having given his friends much vexation, had ravished, robbed, and murdered a

young lady to whom he paid his addresses, and to whom, but for these his shocking principles, he would have been married. She was the daughter of a man of consequence, and her name—”

“Was Maria De Reik,” said I; “a twin brother of mine committed the murder, and we are so much alike in our persons, that I am not at all surprised, if I have been mistaken for him and followed to this place.” I said this with a better command of myself than I could have expected, for I felt very much agitated. The young man expressed some astonishment at this, and said that he had a very great desire to hear me farther upon this subject at dinner time, when he should expect to see me; but was going that moment to pay a visit to his dear Antonionetta. He then left me; and giving my servants orders to admit nobody else, as I wished to take some sleep, I fell to thinking what had best be done. After turning the thing a good deal in my thoughts, I came to a determination to stay in the place where I was at present, and made a memorandum in my pocketbook what lies I had told, that I might not forget any, and contradict myself. This I have found to be a very good rule for a liar to go by; it has been of great use to me, and I would recommend it to others. I now dressed myself, and went to dine with my friend Raphini. The entertainment was very sumptuous, and about twenty young men of the best fashion in the place were there; it was a gentleman’s party only. A great deal of wine, which was of many sorts and very exquisite, was drank at dinner time, which, instead of extinguishing thirst, poured oil on its fire; in fine, many fell asleep and more drunk under the table. Sitting at some distance from the master

of the house, I contrived to escape the wine, and to pick the pockets of every gentleman in the room except those of my young friend, who, though he had fallen asleep in his chair, had not fallen out of it, so I thought it best not to meddle with him. Having thus filled my stomach and my pockets, I departed. Coming to my lodgings, I unloaded my pockets of all that was my own as well as other people's, and, returning to the company, I fell asleep amongst the rest.

Raphini was the first that awoke, and finding me to be the only man, besides himself, who had been able to sit in his chair, he touched me on the shoulder and begged me to get up and help look to the company, some of them having fallen across the table, and many more rolled down under it. The first thing we did was to give ease to their throats by untying all their neckcloths; when, stooping for this purpose, with a candle in my hand, Raphini discovered my pockets to be turned inside out. I pretended to be greatly surprised at it, and said I had been robbed of everything which I had brought with me, even of my pocket-handkerchief; the pockets of the rest not being turned inside out as mine were, passed unnoticed at that time.

Servants were now called, and every man sent to his own house. Raphini called on me the next day, and after having asked me what I had lost, said I had but neighbour's fare, for every man, himself excepted, and why excepted he could not divine, had their pockets picked as well as myself. I told him, that, amongst other things, I had lost a snuff-box set with diamonds, worth, in English, at least a thousand guineas.

This exploit made a fine talk in Milan; and Raphini turned all his servants neck and heels out of his house.

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Within a few days he called upon me again, and brought a snuff-box with him of great value, and begged my acceptance of it, to make amends for the one which, he said, I had lost at his house; but he could by no means prevail on me to accept of it upon those grounds. However the generous Raphini would not let me off so, for he changed his plea, and begged me most earnestly to accept of it as a token of his gratitude for saving his Antonionetta. I refused again, and said, his friendship was worth a thousand such boxes, how valuable soever they might be, with which and the thanks of the lady and her family I was more than sufficiently rewarded.

“That friendship, then,” said he, “I present you in this box, which you must needs refuse if you refuse the box.”

I made a bow in silence, and took the box. My acceptance of it gave him a great deal of pleasure. As soon as he was gone, I was assaulted with such an host of armed thoughts that pierced me as it were with spears and arrows, and filled my heart with inexpressible anguish.

“What the devil can be the reason of this,” said I; “were I known to be the robber, and liked to be hanged for what I have done, there were reason enough then to be uneasy; but I am not only not known, but not so much as in the least degree suspected. Then, being in perfect safety, why am I vexed and punished with these executioners of the soul? I am new in my business, that must be the reason of it—have as yet some of those foolish prejudices hanging in my mind, of sin, of conscience, and a fear of after reckonings, for which I may thank my father and mother. I had

best go and get absolution!—no—not so bad as that neither, no priest shall ever be said to pick my pocket. I am a novice in these things, that is the matter, custom will make all easy, and I will not spare now my hand is in.”

I had not been in this place above a month before I had seconded this my resolution with dreadful crimes, and two, if not three, murders, and had the address to escape being found in any. Nay, I committed two murders, and so contrived the thing as to stand upon a better foot with the relations of those whom I had despatched after the murders were committed than before, but it will make my story too long to come to particulars. Now instead of disarming the terrible executioner within, every crime I committed tied new lashes into the scourge of conscience; a power which I set down for omnipotent, for do what I would I could not subdue it. Sometimes I fancied that I should suffer less if I gave myself up to justice; one thing, however, I always held in reserve, and which I was sure would salve all sores, and that was, if all should fail to appease and disarm the Fury within me, that scourged me night and day without mercy or remorse, self-destruction, which was always within my power: and when I grew past relish for what some are pleased to call sin, or disabled from committing it, I would die by my own hand, and put an end to every agony at one blow.

I had now paid some attention to a married woman in Milan, which by some means got into her husband's ears, when I was set upon by bullies in the street one night, and had certainly been murdered, if my young friend Raphini had not fought like a dragon on my side and saved my life by laying two of the villains dead at

his foot. I was seized by a very powerful man who held me in his arms like a vise while another ran me twice through the body. Raphini, who deserved a better friend, for I slew his brother one night in the street to get a woman whom he protected out of his hands, which however (that is the author of the murder) never came to Raphini's knowledge, Raphini, carried me in his arms to his own house, repeated his gratitude for the services I had done his Antonionetta, put me into the hands of his own surgeon, a most skilful man, and took every care of me until I was able to get abroad again, when I took an affectionate leave of him and his Antonionetta, whom he had just married, and went into France.

I never believed in hell until I had kindled an eternal fire in my own bosom; I needed no other, for I had a hell of my own, and, that I might never want torment, I always carried it about with me, and should have destroyed myself one night to make my escape from it if my pistol had not missed fire.

("It were odds but you got into a worse," quoth Old Crab.)

Be that as it might, I had come to such an extremity that I was ready to risk any change rather than bear the agonies which I felt, agonies which I could not at all account for. I threw the pistol upon the ground and called myself a thousand fools for what I had attempted. I am my own master, said I, to whom am I accountable for what I do but to myself? What lord, what master is this, that lives within me, that chides and rebukes, nay, punishes me too, if I do anything which he is not pleased to approve of! What should I care for any law who do not believe in any of

its penalties? I must be a fool or madman to vex myself with idle recollections—but why should an action which the world calls an evil one, wound me thus, like the Parthian, after it is past? What is it that makes my memory a nest of hornets? How comes it about that I am thus stung within? What is it within me that is not under my control? Not subject, but rebellious to my will? For I would not be miserable if I could be what I would be: What is it that divides me thus against myself? Who dares hold this sword of justice in my bosom, inflicts these dreadful wounds, when I do to another what I would not have done to myself? I believe in no superior power, therefore can fear none. Heaven to me is but an unbounded uninhabited space, my fancy puts no terrible tenant in it, and calls it lord, supreme, almighty and I know not what. These dreams, if dreams they be, which much I doubt, I leave to others, and yet feel that scourge which pious fools award the damned in hell. These reflections followed the attempt which I made on my own life, when wearied with inexpressible storms and agonies of the mind, I threw myself upon my bed, and looked for some ease in sleep, but in vain. The fury followed me up still with her damnable whip, and with the help of my imagination made sleep, a heaven to others, hell to me.

“I had a taste of that old devil’s whip,” quoth Old Comical, “once upon a time, but I found out a way to put the old girl into good humour, and, though she gives me a touch now and then, we are very good friends in the main.”

“By what means, sir?” said the man.

“Why, I turned Christian and parish clerk,” quoth Old Comical, “by this good gentleman’s advice that sits next me, (meaning Old Crab,) grew to be honest and just in all my dealings, went to church, and said my prayers, and it made a new man of me; I slept sound, ate and drank heartily, grew as merry as a cricket, and as fat as a porker. Come, said I, to my conscience, I am sorry for what I have done and have made all men amends, so let us have no more cuffing and kicking, old one. Since which time I and the old cream of tartar have rubbed on pretty fairly on the average—she still spits in my face at times, but we never come to such a quarrel as to part snuff-boxes. One day, it is true, I got to the cock and drew a pint of my master’s strong beer over and above my allowance, when the old toad whipt up her foot, gave me a kick in the breech, and bade me go and be damned! What a devil of a pother there is about a pint of six-penny, quoth I.”

“Hold your tongue, John,” quoth Old Crab, “let us hear this fellow out.”)

From Italy I went into France, continued the man, and soon found my way to Paris, where I found means to drown reflection for a time in the gayeties and debaucheries of the place, for I had plenty of money left and stuck at nothing to gratify every appetite that called upon me. Here, after a run of excesses, I fell sick, grew daily worse and worse, and when my physicians, for I thought I should be safer in the hands of three than one, told me that it was their duty to warn me of my danger, they almost frightened me to death. I lay on my bed and pondered upon death, what

it could be, and what would become of me? If, said I, I am to be called to some bar to give an account of my deeds on earth, and if those things, called the Commandments, are the laws of some supreme judge, my head is devoted who have broken them all! My mind, like a thing that is sore all over, could touch on nothing but what gave it pain! my fires within, as if aided by those without, for I lay in a burning fever, flamed fiercer now, and the thoughts of what I had done shot like red-hot arrows through my soul, giving me as it were a double pain, by lancing and burning at once. Hell, said I, if true, must be ease to this!—and in my frenzy I prayed heartily to the devil to come and take me into hell for a refuge! When I was in health and could take what pleasure pleased me best, I had brought myself to believe that there was no God; but now I was sick, and like to die, I grew terribly afraid that there was one. Fear is a very troublesome thing, and I felt at this moment the full effects of it, and I had no way to get rid of it but to cling fast to my atheism. For an avenger of crimes was of all things the most horrible to my soul.

Matters were in an even scale with me for a week, and I hung trembling on a balance between two worlds, there was not a grain of sand to choose either way, when a friend of mine sent me a new physician who undertook to cure me, and whether he had any hand in my cure, or not, I will not say, but I certainly got well under his care. There lived a grave gentleman at this time in Paris, an ecclesiastic, whose house I visited for no other reason than because he had a very pretty wife, against whom I had an ill design. I had taken it into my head that he had more beauty in his house than

came to his share, if he kept it all to himself. The first thing I did, as soon as I was allowed to go out, was to pay this man a visit, not to see him, but his wife. Calling at his house I found him sick in bed and given over by his physicians. Finding his wife to be in the room with him, which, indeed, she never left, for she was one of the best of wives, I expressed a greater desire to see my friend and take my leave of him, for if I were not admitted into the sick man's chamber, I found I could not expect to get a sight of his lady. It was with great difficulty that I got admittance at last. But he said that he thought that he might be of some use to me in his present situation, knowing me to be a man of what he called loose principles, and he sent for me to his bedside, where I found his wife praying by his pillow. I kept my eyes fixed upon her until she arose, for she had been kneeling down, and as soon as her prayer was ended, I came to the sick man's bed, and, shaking him by the hand, asked him how he did?

He said, with a calm smile, "that he had but a very short time to live; his physicians had done their last duty, which was to bid him prepare for death, and he was prepared accordingly; for he told them that a matter of such weight had not been put off till sickness came, for he never was better prepared to die than when in the best health; things were uncertain here, and life, amongst others, as uncertain as any of them all, and it were madness in any, who could not so much as reckon one day upon it, not to be fully prepared to go out of the world."

His wife, at whom I cast an eye as often as I could, stood weeping at the bed's foot, with her eyes stead-

fastly fixed upon her husband's face, as if she would look her most while she could see him.

"My dearest Anna," said he, "I should take these tears more kindly if they did you no injury, but you know that they must give me pain, and what gives me pain, I am sure, must injure you.—Cease, then, to vex thy gentle bosom, Anna; He, in whose service I have spent my life, will be good to me, will take care of me, will make me happy: Let that be thy comfort during our short absence from each other; it will be but a short one, my Anna. Trust to our kind heavenly Father in this matter, thou hast ever been too good to be forsaken by Him. If He should please to take me into heaven, come, my Anna, when his will shall be, and fill the measure of my happiness; for, till thy coming, something will be wanted to make it full. But I feel that I must soon resign thee to His care on earth—Oh, what pleasure will it be if I can but look at thee; see thee warm in His services who hath blessed us in each other here, and thy heart not cease to be grateful to him, even when he has taken me away from thee. Come here to me, my dearest wife, for I feel that I am this moment called; give me thine hand. The only thing that gives my soul disquiet, dear Anna, is our parting!—All else is peace—God bless you!"

Saying which, and his words are engraven on my memory, the sick man died as calmly as if he fell asleep. I cannot say that I had never been present at any man's death before, because I have murdered several with my own hand, but no death ever touched my heart like this. My late dangerous state, and all the horrors and dangers that attended it, came into my mind; and, I confess I was a good deal puzzled to

make it out how this man came by all his serenity, when I, who expected to die as much as he could do, was tossed and vexed with storms and agonies. How comes this difference between us? said I: this man could die more quietly than I could go to sleep! Why should my heart be torn by furies, and by dragons, at an hour like this? Terrified at I scarce knew what, and at going I knew not where? This man died like a brave fellow. If I had died I should have died like a coward. This determined me in favor of suicide. It were best not to wait to be frightened in this manner—instant death is the best; it cuts short all idle fears and fancies. The different habits, constitutions, tempers, and complexions of men must put in all this difference. I am one who am not made to die calmly; my foolish head runs too much upon rapes and murders that I have committed, for me to be at all quiet at such an hour. These thoughts occurred to me when this man dropped his head upon his wife's bosom, and expired without a sigh but for her he loved. She was overwhelmed with sorrow; I tried to comfort her, but was not much of a hand at it, so I made the best of my way out of the room; and, whether she suspected my design upon her, I cannot say, but I could never get any interview with her afterwards.

All the good which I derived from this scene was a firm resolution immediately to blow my own brains out, if ever I should be taken ill again, conceiving the first door to be the best to get out of a bad house. The common hangman, however, had like to have saved me the expenses of powder and shot, for I very soon after had as narrow an escape as ever any man had who deserved to be hanged. Disappointed in getting

possession of this lovely woman, who died in convulsions soon after her husband, for such was the poignancy of her grief at his loss, who was young, good, and handsome, for good, people called him, for some reasons best known to themselves, parson and fool having ever been two words to express the same thing with me, (some looked at Old Crab here, but he took no notice,) disappointed, I say, in getting possession of this lady, whose grief threw her into fits, and brought her speedy death, I was willing to make the best use of my time, and followed a smart woman home from one of the theatres, that took my fancy vastly. She was a little like you, madam (said he to Genevieve) though not by any means so handsome; she entered a passage, I followed her. We came to a door, at which hung two lamps, when, seeing me, she asked me what I wanted in a private passage? I made my apologies and said, I expected to find a nearer way to my lodgings. She told me there was no thoroughfare, and entered at the door, which a servant instantly closed against me, and there I stood for a little time like a graven image. I knocked at the door, when the same servant re-appeared; I asked him if the lady whom he had let in belonged to that house? He said she was his mistress, and that the house was hers. I asked her name? It was Pyrreau. I went away, having so well noted the place as not to be at any great loss to find it again. Making a good many inquiries I contrived to pick up more particulars of this lady's matters than I had any reason to expect. Thus prepared, I called on her in a few days, and was admitted by the same servant, who was directed to say, that a stranger would speak with his mistress upon some important matter.

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I was shown into a handsome apartment, where, having waited some time, she came in, and another with her, who was too much like her not to be known to be her sister. These two sisters joined their purses and lived together in a very elegant manner. I was asked for my errand.

"Madam," said I, addressing the lady whom I had followed from the theatre, "what I have to say must be said to you alone, as it concerns you only."

"You may say what you please, sir," said she; "this lady is my sister, and we keep no secrets apart."

"Matters of love, madam, I presume."

"No, sir," said she, interrupting me, "not even those; I beg you will speak on."

"Then, madam," said I, "I must beg leave to ask a question, lest I be misinformed before I proceed. Do you know such a person as Mr. Ramond?"

"I do," said she, changing her colour; "what, on earth, have you got to say about him?"

"He is ready, madam, to take you under his protection, and to fly with you, if you can get to the house of Mrs. Vibaud, which, as I am told, is about seven miles from Paris."

"It is impossible," said she, "that Mr. Ramond can be returned; he cannot, he dare not return!"

"Nay, madam," said I, "it was no longer ago than this morning that I saw him; and, telling him that I knew where you lived by accident, I received this message which I have now delivered, and leave you to make what use you please of my services."

Upon which I arose and made my bow, as one going:—"Mr. Ramond," added I, "was pleased to say that he was, for some reasons, very glad of a stranger,

as I am to him, to take this message to you—perhaps those reasons are not unknown to you?”

“They are not, sir,” said she, “but stay a little; you say that Mr. Ramond and you are strangers, pray how came this matter on foot between you? Where did you meet? How became you acquainted?”

She was in such agitation, and asked so many questions, that I scarce knew how to answer her. Fearful of having one put which I might not know what to do with, and willing to get away as soon as possible, I said I met the young gentleman accidentally in a morning’s ride, and dismounting to change the position of his saddle, I held his horse, that was a little unruly, while he did what he wanted, and this casual interview brought on some talk between us. Among other things, I told him of my adventure in your passage the other evening, when, as you may recollect, I came to your door.

“I do very well,” said she,—and was going on, when I again bowed to the ladies—and said I had an engagement.

“One moment, sir,” said she, “pray leave your address.”

I put a card into her hand which had a false one written on it, and went away.

The particulars of this lady’s affairs, which I contrived to pick up in Paris, may not be of importance enough to be brought in here, to compensate for the time the tale will take in the telling. Suffice it to say, I watched her door until I saw her set out in her carriage, when I rode after her, and found she took the road for which I was well prepared. Having armed myself, I took two men armed with me, who rode after me, dressed like servants. As soon as I was got out

of Paris, I sent them on to an appointed place where they should have a carriage in readiness, and lie in wait for me, I, in the mean time, following that of Madam Pyrreau, which, for some reason, did not go very fast. When it came to the place of my ambuscado, my two men ran to the heads of the horses, and with their pistols kept Madam Pyrreau's servants in check, while I robbed the carriage of their mistress. They were spirited fellows, however, and chose to contest the point with us, when I shot the footman dead upon the spot, and the coachman, finding three to one against him, leaped upon his box and drove away on a full gallop, leaving his mistress, who had fainted away, lying on a bank by the road side. I made all the haste I could to put her into my carriage which stood at hand, and drove away to the house prepared for my purposes not a mile from the spot—dogged, as I found afterwards, by the coachman mounted upon one of the coach-horses.

When Madam Pyrreau came to her senses, she made all the noise and fuss which women usually make in these cases. I ordered my two fellows to keep watch at a little distance from the house, and carried my prize by main force into an upper room, and locked myself in with her. I told her she had best be quiet, for all cries were equally fruitless, as all resistance was vain. She defended herself, however, against every attempt in a very extraordinary manner for an hour, by which time I had nearly torn all the clothes off her back. She now became exhausted and could scarce have held out five minutes longer, when the room door was forced with great violence, and in rushed Mr. Ramond himself, and seized me with the utmost fury. I heard a firing of pistols at that moment, when five or six men

ran into the room, and I was made a prisoner. I should not have known Mr. Ramond, had not Madam Pyrreau cried out in a voice of one frantic with joy. "O my dearest Ramond! save me! save me!"

I was instantly carried out of the house, at the door of which I saw one of my fellows lie dead. One of the men who had me in custody was Madam Pyrreau's coachman, who told me, amongst other kind things, that he would take care to see me hanged for shooting his brother. I was then forced into Madam Pyrreau's carriage, which took the road to Paris. On the way the carriage was stopped by highwaymen, and I, in the scuffle between the people who held me in custody and the robbers, contrived to make my escape into a wood; and a narrow escape it was, for two of them ran after me into the thicket, but, it being dark, I gave them the slip, and the hangman too. After midnight I crept into Paris, and contrived to get to my lodgings, and, packing up my property, paid my landlord, to whom I made an excuse of a relation expecting to die, and set off immediately to Calais, with an intention to sail for England. Your son and I, sir (said he to Mr. Decastro) happened to be passengers in the same boat, and here we first became acquainted with each other. Soon after we were afloat the wind began to grow humour-some and capricious, the master whom all the boats obey, and was whimsical enough to bring us back again to Calais. Here we were forced to stay for a week before we could get off, during which time your son, sir, and I became great friends. Something more than civilities passed between us, he made me a confidant in his affairs, told me why he left England, and that he was going to London to call his agent to an account

for negligence in his remittances. Having very little money to carry him there, and finding, for we had mutually trusted one another with each other's affairs, finding that I had a good sum of ready cash, he borrowed the three hundred pounds with which his estate now stands charged to me; and if he had borrowed ten times as much it had been all the better for me. We were wrecked on the English coast, and I saved nothing but my life. He, luckily, having what he had borrowed of me on his person, came to shore with it in his pocket. My loss was very great. Seeing me in a fit of despair, he generously told me that, having taken me up a rich man, he would not set me down a poor one, and, if I did not feel too much indignity in the offer, he would make me his confidential servant. I said if I had known nothing of him before that moment I should rather choose to wear his livery than my own rags, for to rags I must needs come, if none would accept my services. Thus I became his servant, and we took places in one of the public carriages which brought us to London, when I found, to my no little comfort, that he was a man of good fortune, and his behaviour to me ever since has been that of a person of generosity and honour.

At these words the man arose, when Old Crab said, "We have not done with you yet, we know little of this scoundrel's history since he returned to England, we would be glad to hear all you know of him from that time to this, leaving out those matters only with which my brother and I became acquainted."

The man took his seat again, and proceeded as follows in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII

John Colbourne's Narrative Concluded

My master, for so I shall now call him, and it is but fit I should, for I had now put on his livery, my master and I stayed some time, it might be two months, in London, after he had settled his matters there, waiting for the arrival of two friends from Paris, the name of one was Colonel Barret, the other Mr. Dogger—they had run into some difficulties, it seems, and had no easy matter to make their escape out of that city. Dogger, heir to a good estate, but his father standing in his way, borrowed pretty freely upon it when he came to London; Barret, a gambler of no common skill, fell to his old trade, and, at one sitting, fleeced a young nobleman of twenty thousand pounds. My master, who had fought a duel with his own brother, upon which account he had left England, grew very uneasy in London, and told his friends, that unless he could find a place where he could live more at his ease he would return to Paris. All his relations, he said, were become bitter enemies, and would be glad to hang him if they could catch him, and his uncle, whom he called Old Crab, had hunted him like an old blood-hound.

“I am the man,” quoth Old Crab, “and there sits he,” pointing to Acerbus, “whom this rascal would have murdered.”

“I beg for your excuse, sir,” said the man, “if I have used any disrespectful words.”

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“No matter, no matter,” quoth Old Crab, “go on.”)

The summer being at hand, my master said he would stay no longer in town, upon which he and his two friends, Dogger and Barret, took a journey into the country to visit some friends there. Soon after this he took his house upon the banks of the river Dee. This house, the property of a man that was anything but honest, was very well placed for a gentleman who might have no objection to a convenient escape by water if need were; and his thoughts by day and dreams by night ran him in the head that need would be; for my master fell into a like disease with myself, or rather weakness, he held no command over his own imagination, which dressed up scarecrows and idle effigies that scarce a baby would be frightened at. These insubstantial shadows haunted him, and every little unexpected noise would flutter him like a pigeon. He had got it in his head that his brother died of some wound which he gave him, he had heard it so reported in London, and elsewhere, and that very great rewards had been offered for his head. He would lie concealed for a month together in those apartments which you inhabited, madam, (said the man to Genevieve,) and in these gloomy moments he had as good been put into any hell as that within him. Here he would admit none but myself to wait on him, and gave out that he was not at home. One night he had been dreaming about some idle thing, when he arose in a great fright, called me out of my bed, and we made our escape in the dark, like some that had broke prison. He had got it in his weak brains that the house was beset, that he should be dragged to jail and be hanged for the murder of his brother, and if he had not got intelligence

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soon after, that his brother were alive and well, of which intelligence I was the means, for I took a journey to Oxford on purpose to get at the truth, he had come to a determination to leave England forever.

("I wish he had," said Genevieve, "or been hanged before he got hold of me!")

Well, madam, as soon as he got this news, he got the news too, by my means also, that his brother was not only alive but was soon to be married to you, madam, which had like to have driven him mad; for he told me that he hated his brother worse than any devil he had ever known, and loved you to distraction; so you may easily think what a tumult the news of your union with his brother might stir in him.

He now set aside all thoughts of being hanged, and fell to plot your destruction, which he said he would bring to pass if he could not get possession of you, or die in the attempt. He forthwith wrote letters to his friends, Dogger and Barret, who, though they spent much of their time at our house, happened to be then at Bath; and instead of coming to us, called upon us to come to them, the colonel having some fits of the gout at that time, and using the baths. My master sent me to Bath, and came to Oaken Grove in the disguise of an old woman with a basket of matches and ballads, to pick up intelligence, and forelay his grounds for his plot.

This done, he came to us at Bath, where he gave orders for the carriage to be made which brought you, madam, to the banks of the Dee; under the pretence that it was made according to the directions of a mad doctor for the removal of a lunatic. The outside looked like a chariot made in the common manner, while the

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inside was a strong box made with two lids to it to lock on the outside, which had the form of doors usual to all carriages. The very great security of this, you, I believe, madam, were soon very well aware of. My master's friends, Dogger and Barret, came into his plot upon a promise of sharing your fortune with him upon his marriage, for which your person was to be held in pawn, to be shared among them by force in case of your refusal, and of which, I hope for your excuse in saying, I, for my services, was to come in for a part.

("As pretty a brood of devils," quoth Old Crab, "as ever was hatched in any nest in hell!")

While this plot was a-breeding, madam, Barret fell ill, and, getting into some danger, he gave up his share in it in a great fright! He believed, he said, in a future account, and was determined to blot this article out of his bill, by a sincere and hearty repentance. I was standing near his bed when he said this, and was forced to leave the room in a moment for fear of laughing aloud. Barret having given up what, indeed, he was at that time not very likely to keep, his share in this thing, my master got acquainted with a young gentleman named Moreton, whose character and colour suited my master's to a shade; bold as a dragon in all sorts of mischief, and a fellow of as little remorse as a millstone. I scarcely believed in a devil before I knew this man; he made a convert of me, for I am sure if devils existed, he must be one incarnate. He had been disinherited by his father for committing force upon his sister, and cutting his mother's throat, who attempted to prevent him. He was the son of a surgeon, and bred to the same business; and after having committed the said acts, he disentombed and anatomized

his mother's body, and read a lecture on its parts. He had the address to escape the law in these matters, but I cannot come to particulars; his father's suspicions, however, were sufficient to bring down his vengeance upon him. From this sketch of his character none will dispute his title, I should think, to Barret's place in this business. All was now ready for our northern expedition, as we called it; your little cottage was to be attacked in the night, madam, and you were to be taken out of it by main force. Before we fixed our day, Barret very unexpectedly recovered; some may think, perhaps, who believe in such things, that his furnace was not as yet heated hot enough for him, so he was permitted to take another little turn in this world, and do a little more mischief in it before he was cast into hell fire. His sickness and his fears fled together, and he repented as he promised to do, but not of coming into our plot, but of his desire to be left out of it. His tears did not fall in vain, he was re-admitted into our conspiracy, and added to the strength of our plot by adding to its number of complotters. As all were to be sharers in the plunder, this expedition was undertaken at the joint expense of the party, and they calculated upon a high percentage for their money.

Now, Madam (said the man, still addressing his discourse to Genevieve), the day was fixed, and we set off upon this our expedition, but we wasted a great deal of time on the roads, by getting so very drunk at the inns, as not to be at all able to proceed. We passed ourselves off for a party of gentlemen on our way into Cumberland to see the lakes. The singularity of our carriage raised some curiosity, but the curious were left to shift for themselves. Coming within a mile of

your cottage, madam, I was despatched to make inquiries, and returned with the very unwelcome news that you were residing for the present at the castle, where it was thought you would stay until your marriage, which was soon to take place, were solemnized. This threw our party into much dilemma, and we expected at one time that the thing must be given up. As to attacking the castle, none was so hardy as to have any the least thought of it, except Moreton, who was laughed at for his pains. Not knowing what course to follow, plotting and unplotting until we were tired, one evening, for we had been in the neighbourhood several days, we took our drawing tables, paper, pencils, and other matters as it should seem for the purpose of sketching views, but really to mask our design, and walked to the banks of the lake opposite to the castle, to be upon the lookout and see what luck might throw in our way. Presently we saw a lady walking alone on the opposite shore, when my master took out his pocket glass, and exclaimed, with an oath, that the game was in view. We immediately concealed ourselves behind some bushes, lest we might be suspected of any design, and my master gave me directions where I might be the most likely to find a boat. I had not run many paces along the bank before I found one chained to a tree, furnished, as good luck would have it, with all necessary matters to put it in motion. I flew back to my master, we immediately put crape upon our faces, and were all of us in the boat in a few minutes. What followed, I believe, is already known.

(“Yes,” said Genevieve, “and not like soon to be forgotten.”)

Our pursuit of you, madam, after you made your

escape out of my master's house, will furnish little worth the telling. We heard of you several times, but picked up more false intelligence than true, which very much favoured your escape, and led us far enough astray. We examined post-chaises, carts, wagons, stage coaches, caravans, and sometimes took the liberty to look into gentlemen's carriages; we inquired at turn-pikes, public-houses, inns, lodging houses, and provision shops, but all equally in vain; so, after having spent a week and all our money in this wild-goose chase, we returned to my master with an empty carriage, empty pockets, and foolish faces.

(“This has been a pretty business, indeed,” quoth Old Crab, “and, put to my girl's affair, I will challenge any family in England to produce two examples of equal wickedness and atrocity.”)

Genevieve asked the man several questions, one of which was, how they contrived matters on the road to Frederick's house? He said that she was passed everywhere for a lunatic on her way to a madhouse, and one so powerful and so dangerous, that they were forced to arm themselves for their own defence. This story, however, was not told unless there was any necessity.)

We avoided all towns as much as possible, which added a great deal to the length of our journey, said the man, and stopped several times at private houses, where relays of post-horses were held in readiness. It remains, madam, added he, that I should make some excuse for the severities shown you while I was in waiting on your person. I have to say that they are en-

tirely to be put to my master's account, whose orders were really rather mitigated towards you than exceeded; and I will not hesitate to confess fairly upon what account. The truth, then, is, that I was myself in love with you, so much so, that I often had a thought of playing false to my master, and would have done it if I could have seen the least chance of success in contriving your escape; and one view alone, which I forbear to repeat, kept me strictly honest after all.

Upon this the man owned that he was very sorry for the part which he had taken in this affair, and humbly begged that Genevieve would have the goodness to forgive him, in token of which she threw him a glove from her arm. The man said he was satisfied, and, picking it up, kissed it, and returned it to the fair owner, and that with a grace which showed much good breeding. He then said that he was quite a stranger to the laws of this country, and what might be due to them for what he had just confessed and done he could not tell; he submitted himself, however, entirely to the mercy of the family, and was willing to come to any trial which might be deemed proper. How it came to pass he could not tell, but he thought, that if one man were more miserable than another he was that wretch, and could be glad to end, if an end were to be had, a life which, for the value of it, were to him better lost than found. He then congratulated Acerbus upon the possession of so fine a woman as Genevieve, with no little elegance of phrase and manner, made his bow, and left the room. In the night he put a period to his existence with a pistol, and was found dead in his bed the next morning.

CHAPTER XIX

Such was the end of this Italian vagabond, a wretch whose crimes and whose vices have rarely been exceeded by any. A singular proof of the force of imagination may be recorded here, for the amusement of the curious. This man had a deep scar on his temple, which added not a little to the savage character of his countenance. Genevieve's first child was marked in a very extraordinary manner with such a scar, and that on the same side of its face; it was, in other respects, a very pretty baby.

The end of this history is now nearly answered, as far as the chief design of it goes; what will be added will be put down rather for the general reader's entertainment, than in furtherance to such chief design,—having two things in our view, to tell the right story to all such as have any acquaintance with the family, and as amusing a one as possible, to such as have not any knowledge of it.

As soon as the wagon arrived at the castle with what goods had been the property of Frederick, great curiosity was excited in all, to see the furniture of poor Genevieve's dismal apartments. All of it came safe, not even the wooden form, not even the earthen pitcher out of which she drank her cold water in her prison-house excepted. The huge iron chest, too, stained with the blood of Moreton and of Dogger, was there; and even the knife which gave Frederick his fatal

wound was found amongst others. Genevieve knew it from the rest, which came with the other things, the moment she saw it. Her Bible and her prayer-book, too, came safe. All these things, however trifling matters they may seem to others, excited a great deal of feeling and interest at the castle, and Genevieve took an odd whim to build two rooms at her cottage, though not underground, without any windows, and into these she disposed the furniture of her dungeon room point to point, in the same manner in which all things were placed in her prison; and these two rooms so much resembled those in which she had been confined, that she said she always felt a momentary flutter whenever she unlocked the door, which opened into them to show the apartments to her friends. She had a case made for the dreadful cross, which she always kept locked for the greater curiosity. This whim put a pretty ornamental wing to her cottage, and answered very well to her servants' offices on the other side: but of this thus far.

Old Crab, upon examining Frederick's bureau, found, to his no little surprise, that he was by no means a poor man, having money in bank-stock that brought him in more than a thousand pounds a year. His book of accounts was an example of accuracy, on the first leaf of which was his agent's address in London, who was luckily known to old Petticraft the lawyer, which circumstance saved Old Crab some trouble in his executorship, for Petticraft recommended the man to Frederick, the man being a relation of his, and could explain who Mr. Fleming was, for Petticraft was privy to Frederick's change of name. Frederick's money came to his father, who settled it upon Acerbus's

younger children, principal and interest together, and it was like to come to a great amount by the time it were wanted.

Time, the sovereign balm to every wound, had now brought a little ease to Mr. and Mrs. Decastro's feelings, and they really felt more for Frederick's loss than such a man as he at all deserved; but it is high time to take our leave of one, we are sorry to call him a relation, who cast so deep a stain on the name of Decastro, and of human nature!

N. B. This brings the history of the family down to the year 1808, since which time some remarkable events have occurred in it, of which, if the readers of this History feel any desire to be informed, the Authors have the permission of the family to give them such information.

THE END



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